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## NEW BIBLE EVIDENCE

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THE HISTORY  
OF



PRINCESS HATSHEPSUT

The Daughter of Pharaoh, who found the infant Moses floating on the Nile in the ark of bulrushes. (Courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

# New Bible Evidence

From the 1925-1933 Excavations

By  
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"Essays on the Old Testament," etc.*

ILLUSTRATED

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## PREFACE

THE United States of America is passing through such a crisis to-day, that some of its best minds may be tempted to say: "We have no time for a book about the Bible." Would that have been the attitude of their forefathers under like circumstances? Was not the Bible the sheet-anchor of the early settlers and founders of America?

Then again, George Bernard Shaw calls the Bible an old collection of myths and fairy tales, and there appears to be quite an impression abroad that this is the case. But if only because that description cuts right across the whole course of American history, it is unacceptable to us. Mr. Shaw would have us believe that the Pilgrim Fathers and the great makers of America *believed a lie!* It seems incredible that the civilization of the United States was begun and built up on mere myths and fairy tales.

Once again: the Old Testament largely concerns the history and religion of the Jewish people. In the countless vicissitudes through which this race has come during the past eighteen centuries, had



it succumbed, or ceased to exist, or sunk into obscurity, it might be said, with some reason, that faith in the truth of the Book was unfounded. But the contrary has proved to be the case—the continued existence and present prosperity of the Jewish race constitute a living witness to a reality which must underlie the Old Testament.

These considerations call for an examination of the Old Testament in the light of recent archæological discoveries.

There are in America, as in other countries, a section of people who believe in the word-for-word correctness of the English Bible; and because people are prone to swing from one extreme to the other, it may be that this attitude of mind has led others to discard the book altogether.

No matter what attitude (conservative or advanced) a man may adopt, he has to face the fact that there are sentences in the Bible which do not make sense. On the other hand such examples serve to demonstrate its great age. The same characteristic occurs in less ancient writings—even in the works of Shakespeare, composed only some three centuries or so ago, and in the English language. But the Bible, so far as the New Testament is concerned, was written down more than eighteen hundred years ago in the colloquial Greek of that time; while the Old Testament was composed from 2500 to 3500 years ago, in the ancient Hebrew language.

There is also abundant evidence that, in course of ages, little mistakes have been made by scribes in copying the sacred texts. But in no instance has it been proven to have affected the fundamental sense and harmony of the truth. In the case of the Old Testament those acquainted with the Hebrew alphabet will be aware that it has no vowel sounds. Some of its letters so closely resemble others that mistakes in transmission are easy; and a comparison with the Septuagint, or Greek translation of the Hebrew text made three centuries before Christ, suggests that such mistakes have occurred even since that time. Such considerations weigh against the assumption of the word-for-word and letter-for-letter correctness of the English Bible.

We must next allow for modern ignorance of the circumstances and surroundings of incidents described, or of words uttered, as recorded in the Bible. Those whose feelings are harrowed by the accounts of Old Testament atrocities should not forget that such incidents occur even in this enlightened age.

When one reads of some event which does not accord with our conventional experience of the laws of Nature, let us remember how unconventional experiences, otherwise miracles, are recorded so frequently in modern life that some of them are probably true. And further that present day Science is no longer ready to dogmatize as to what

is possible and impossible. There is yet another aspect of the miraculous which is worthy of consideration. Suppose that critics of only half a century ago had read in the Bible how people one thousand miles away heard Moses speaking from Mount Sinai—imagine their incredulity! Or how the chanting of Psalms in Solomon's Temple was enjoyed by the Queen of Sheba in far-off South Arabia! To-day such a stupendous miracle has become a common experience. Americans listen through three thousand miles of space to a speech by King George, or enjoy a European Concert. Thus miracles are, after all, largely a question of knowledge and ignorance. Times have been so bad, so much of our modern philosophy has let us down, that we are all more ready to admit the possibility of gaps in modern knowledge than we were a few years ago.

Those who employ critical methods in the study of the Bible, have got into the habit of representing those who advance proofs to the contrary, as being prejudiced. Is there any reason why those who are led by evidence to adopt an orthodox attitude to the Bible, should be more prejudiced than those who describe it as a collection of fairy tales? Come to think of it—the realistic way the Bible handles human nature and its infirmities, has always aroused grave antagonism. There are some who seek to justify their lives by casting doubt on

the Bible. In a quest for the real truth one must surely take account of possible prejudices on *both* sides, and a long-standing accumulation of them.

There is yet another class of prejudice which the archæologist has to face; it comes from those who cannot disentangle themselves from their past academic environment. Thus, when Schliemann uncovered the remains of Troy in 1870, the scholars laughed him to scorn. Or, again: so bewildered were German Professors when Dr. Hilprecht, on behalf of the University of Pennsylvania, laid bare a great temple platform at Nippur in Mesopotamia, built of bricks inscribed with the name of a monarch whom the critics had treated as mythical, that the excavator was positively accused of perpetrating the forgery of a whole Babylonian temple platform!

Although this book will draw attention to fundamental mistakes about the Bible, the author himself makes no claim to infallibility. There has been, and there is, every excuse for errors; but none for the assurance with which they are sometimes presented to the public; nor for the contemptuous disregard of the Bible narrative. The spirit which has led critics to strain at a gnat in the sacred text, and swallow a camel of conjecture, is void of all sense of proportion.

To-day, it ought to be the object of all educated and intelligent men and women to seek the Truth; and, having regard to the great part the Bible has

played in our history, to accord it fair play. The perplexities of modern life may still, perchance, be solved, and fears and anxieties dispersed, by the reading and study of the sacred Book, even as our forefathers found to be the case.

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## I

### CLEARING THE GROUND

**A**BOUT a century and a half ago, men began to use the knowledge then current, as a standard for the criticism of the Old Testament; and each succeeding generation adopted similar methods. Thus it comes about that, to-day, we are able to survey the efforts and conclusions of several generations of critics based solely upon the current knowledge of their time.

As time went on, it became obvious that some past conclusions clearly conflicted with new knowledge, so each generation of critics endeavored to modify them. But it is remarkable to note how few seem to have taken account of the unreliable character of the standards which they and their predecessors used. For the standard of human knowledge has been constantly changing, and this is especially the case in regard to what is known concerning ancient civilizations.

It was a generation or so after the critics had commenced their work, that men began to dig into the mounds of ancient ruins in Bible lands in order

to learn about their past history. Thus archæology asserted itself, and began to unravel the evidence that relics of Bible civilization had to tell of their own times. During the last eight years a clearer understanding of the background of the earlier books of the Old Testament has thus been revealed to us. But in the meanwhile progress is impeded by a residuum of learning—an inchoate mass of critical conclusions—which being originally based upon incorrect assumptions, have become serious obstacles to the ascertainment of the truth. So it has become necessary to scrap most, if not all, of what people have learned or read about the Old Testament, in colleges and seminaries, in text-books, commentaries and encyclopedias, and to go back to the original books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua.

In order to justify such a drastic rejection of erudition, the following are some specific examples of fundamental errors—that is to say, of mistakes which nullify the whole course of reasoning, and conclusions, of some particular critic, or group of critics.

There is no longer any doubt that the races who inhabited the Euphrates valley, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, in ancient times, possessed a much higher culture than has been postulated for them by Bible critics. For example we now know that the art of writing in cuneiform on clay tablets was in general use long before the days of Abraham;

and discoveries referred to in this work carry even alphabetical script back to before the days of Moses. It would almost seem as though civilized man has always had the means for recording in writing, and did record in writing;—events, laws, customs, rituals, history, etc., everything such as we find recorded in the books of Genesis, Exodus, etc.

How different must have been the whole course of criticism of the Old Testament had this evidence been originally available and its significance appreciated a century and a half ago! We are, of course, aware that critics now affirm that they take into account the fact of the art of writing being in existence in ancient times. In this respect they only echo the words of the late Canon S. R. Driver, one of the most celebrated of the last generation of scholars. His dissections of the first six books of the Old Testament led him to make the following statement:

“The two earliest narratives are undoubtedly those by J and E; these are based upon the oral traditions current in the eighth and ninth centuries.”

So statements that purported to be made by Moses five or six centuries earlier, were oral traditions of the eighth and ninth centuries; and, in order to complete the critical diagnosis of dates, were first committed to writing about B. C. 621.

Now the pronouncements of distinguished professors in every branch of learning, however positive they may be, are nevertheless not immune from those canons of common sense which control the conclusions of ordinary mortals. So we are entitled to ask, how it is possible for Driver and his followers to postulate oral traditions in the eighth or ninth centuries, if the art of writing was in common use from before the days of Moses and onwards?

When Driver goes on to affirm that he has taken account of the fact of the art of writing being in existence in ancient times, it can be pointed out in justice to his memory, that the statement was made before many of the archæological discoveries to which attention is about to be drawn in these pages.

But nevertheless, even in Canon Driver's day, it had become evident that all sorts of writing, cuneiform, hieroglyphic, and even alphabetical, were in common use in Syria and Palestine at the very time of Moses. His affirmation that he had taken account of the existence of such writing in framing his conclusion, is quoted by his followers to-day as though it were sufficient to override the effects of recent discoveries. It is unfortunate that Driver appears to have contented himself with a simple affirmation that the discovery of writing made no difference. For such a statement, even from Driver, imposes altogether too great a strain upon our credulity. It is as though someone were now to

affirm that although handwriting was practiced in Norman times, and moreover was superseded by the printing press; yet nevertheless the account of the Norman conquest of England only existed in the form of oral tradition in the days of the Pilgrim Fathers! And that these oral traditions were first committed to writing after the American Civil War! What would our readers think of such an assertion? So much for the ancient art of writing—oral tradition may be the method of transmission of the primitive peoples of the world, but the archæological evidence to be advanced in these pages, will prove that Abraham and his descendants cannot be placed in any such category. It has been a blunder of the first order to suppose that they were anything of the sort.

Our next specific example of fundamental blundering over the Old Testament is due to the attempt of commentators to apply the theory of evolution to religion. It is no part of this work to discuss the subject of evolution as applied to the physical side of humanity. But the attempt to apply evolution to the religious side, is responsible for another long train of blunders in connection with the Bible. The following are examples from the works of distinguished and well-known contemporary writers:

“We have seen that religious belief in its gradual development among early races passed through the stages of Animism and Polytheism. Since this is

recognized as a universal rule among all peoples whose religion develops sufficiently, we may assume that the Hebrews or their forebears were no exception."

The evidence of Anthropology will be cited in these columns to prove that the original religion of the "early races" was actually Monotheism or something very like it. So far as the Hebrews are concerned, or rather their forebears, the Semites, it is not necessary to "assume" anything, since the evidence of the ancient cuneiform writing, which will be referred to later, testifies to the fact that Monotheism was also their original religion.

Or to take another illustration:

"There was no heaven in the Semitic or Sumerian beliefs."

This strange statement appears also to be another evolutionary conjecture; and again the evidence of the cuneiform tablets indicates the belief, both of a heaven for the righteous, and the presence there of the bread of life and the water of life which figure prominently some thousands of years later in the discourses of Jesus Christ.

A fourth example of fundamental mistakes in certain Bible commentaries, crops up in connection with the date of the Exodus. On inconclusive evidence it has long been assumed that the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt took place in the reign of a Pharaoh named Merneptah, about the year 1220

B. C. And because there was evidence, from Egyptian records, that the tribe of Asher was in its proper place in Palestine as early as 1300 B. C., elaborate theories have been evolved that most of the twelve tribes of Israel never went down into Egypt at all!

One would have thought critics might have sensed the fact that the presence of the tribe of Asher in its proper place in Palestine, as early as 1300 B. C., presupposed an earlier date for the Exodus. Such an assumption was of a simpler character than to discredit the ancient narrative; but Bible commentators as a rule display little respect for the Old Testament when it stands in the way of their conjectures. Convincing evidence will be advanced in these columns to prove that the Exodus from Egypt occurred about the year B. C. 1440, or fully two hundred and twenty years earlier than the generally accepted date. There accordingly seems every reason why the tribe of Asher should have been in its proper place in Palestine before the year 1300 B. C.

Again: the views of authorities on the Old Testament narrative have been deflected by the speculations of German critics on the subject of the length of rule over Egypt of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings. Instead of accepting the statements of the Egyptian historian Manetho that this mysterious race ruled over Egypt for over five centuries, the modern German critic has reduced this period to a century. Sir Flinders Petrie, who has



spent years in excavating Hyksos sites, has come definitely to the conclusion that the reign of these Shepherd Kings lasted for an even longer period of time than is specified by Manetho.

And this brings us to yet another misunderstanding which seems to have arisen through disregarding the very definite statements made in the ninth chapter of Genesis. Critical works on the Bible are full of allusions to "Canaanite" civilization. Some German critics at least have thrown the Bible's genealogy of Abraham in Genesis 11 to the winds, and boldly affirmed that he was a Canaanite! But we read in Genesis 9 that a curse was placed upon Canaan; and upon his race, the Amorites, etc.

Attention will later be drawn to the fact that the very word "Amurru," or Amorites, was used as a class name for laborers on the cuneiform tablets. And yet the Hebrew language and even the introduction of writing has been ascribed to them!

Archæological evidence will be cited to prove that the Canaanites and Amorites owed their civilization to the Semites; descendants of Shem like Abraham, who conquered and occupied both Syria and Palestine some seven centuries before his time; and that they in turn were followed by their relatives the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings. Gaza was the base used for the invasion of Egypt, but the camps of the Shepherd Kings are studded all over Syria and Palestine. Sir Flinders Petrie's excavations of Gaza have revealed contemporary evidence of

Semitic occupation from B. c. 3000 to B. c. 1500. Evidence will be advanced for the residence round the Dead Sea before Abraham's time of Arabs, also a branch of the Semitic race. Their alphabetical cuneiform tablets recently found are written in Archaic Hebrew, and dated 1400-1350 B. c. No doubt during the long occupation of both Syria and Palestine the Semites intermarried and became absorbed into the Canaanites and the Amorites. But to assume that the latter's was the original civilization, that theirs was the culture, and theirs the Hebrew language, in face of recent evidence, is no longer admissible.

Those of our readers who remember what they have learned or read about the earlier books of the Old Testament in recent years, those who are acquainted with recent works on Biblical archaeology, will appreciate the far-reaching effects of the new evidence.

It is a source of satisfaction to us all to know that the great skyscraper buildings of New York are founded upon the solid rock. What use would they be if they were built on sand? But so far as the edifices of erudition that have been reared by Old Testament criticism are concerned, their foundations are proving to be of most fragile material, if there is any material at all left for them to stand upon.

The contemporary evidence of writing, supplied by archaeology, now makes conjectures about the

oral transmission of the earlier books of the Old Testament look absurd.

Next the theory of the evolution of religion and lack of a belief of a future life, in the presence of evidence to the contrary, melts away, leaving another skyscraper of knowledge standing on thin air.

Then all that has been written or taught on the basis of the Exodus having taken place in B. C. 1220 proves also to be on an unsound foundation.

While lastly the Canaanite's culture skyscraper seems based on misapprehension. Our readers will find these instances by no means exhaust the list of unsound foundation on which the edifices of Old Testament criticisms have been reared. But it is urged that they are already sufficient to justify the invitation to neglect them for the traditional road mapped out by the Old Testament, and to endeavor to verify the route by studying the ancient landmarks that have been found.

The alternative of following the guidance and authority of critics and commentators in the light of recent knowledge, can but bewilder the issue and lead us all astray. It is quite obvious that the complete assurance, with which many have written, is entirely unjustified, even as it is out of harmony with the scientific outlook of the present day. Yet the mass of people are not aware of this fact; and the erroneous belief that scholars and scientists knew all there was to be known about the Old Testament, has had a blighting effect upon Christianity.

The vast archæological discoveries of the past eight years, resemble the fragments of some immense jig-saw puzzle; they need a guide to fit them together. The Old Testament has proved an excellent guide to the geography of the Holy Land; may it not also be of service in elucidating its history?

Such are the general lines of progress pursued in this book. Nevertheless whatever the method, all need more landmarks to guide them through the story of these ancient records. And it may here be pointed out that at times the Old Testament makes contact with a territory which has been even less explored than Palestine,—the territory of the Unseen. The radio is beginning to familiarize us with the potentialities of space. What are its secrets? Has it inhabitants? Whence come those messages and manifestations to which all ages of man, civilized as well as uncivilized, Christian as well as Pagan, bear witness? Men are still trying to weigh and measure the Bible by imperfect historical evidence, and by materialistic conceptions of the Unseen, which science has already discarded.

But to return to archæology. Our readers will readily understand what has prompted the author to encourage and promote excavation. The authorities who are quoted in these pages are not to be held to assent to all the deductions and conclusions of this book. They are concerned with questions of fact, or in so far as their statements involve

deductions, an endeavor has been made to quote their actual words.

The author's share in the excavations of the hill of Ophel, outside modern Jerusalem, brought him into contact with Professor Garstang, at that time Director of Antiquities to the Palestine government. How they came to collaborate on the Jericho excavations, and the results and conclusions that flow from them, form part of the subject matter of this book. For technical details and more extended information our readers are referred to *The Foundations of Bible History—Joshua Judges*, by Professor Garstang. He was in charge of the excavations at Jericho; and his expert knowledge and painstaking ability, coupled with the devoted service of his wife, deserve the widest and fullest recognition. His name should go down to posterity for having discovered the correct chronology of the Old Testament from the Exodus onward, and for the evidence he has found which suggests that the narrative of the taking of Jericho was written by contemporaries.

So far as finances are concerned, thanks are also due to the late Lord Melchett for having borne half the cost of one expedition, and to Mr. Davis Bryan, the Musees du Louvre, the University of Liverpool, and the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, all of England, for collaboration in a later one. Congratulations must also be offered to M. Viroleaud and all the distinguished French scholars

concerned in the recent discovery and decipherment of the Ras Shamra Tablets and to Professor Bauer of Halle.

References will also be made to the invaluable work of Dr. Langdon, Professor of Assyriology at Oxford, and the expedition of the Herbert Weld (for the University of Oxford) and Field Museum of Chicago. These expeditions have excavated Kish, about eight miles east of Babylon, and Dr. Langdon has discovered and deciphered quantities of these cuneiform tablets. Such contributions from Mesopotamia are essential for a correct understanding of early Old Testament history. Attempts to ignore this class of evidence originally helped to mislead critics.

It has not been the good fortune of the author to meet that distinguished American excavator, Dr. W. F. Albright, whose fame is great as an authority in recent Palestine archæology. His book—*The Archæology of Palestine and the Bible*, contains a record of the evidences he has found left by those who lived in Bible times. These will be cited occasionally in their proper places in our pages. They are the more valuable because Dr. Albright considers them from a different standpoint to that adopted for this book.

We are also indebted to Dr. Woolley and to his financial supporters for his excavations at Ur of the Chaldees, and his reports on this work.

Lastly the English veteran excavator, and Egypt-

ologist, Sir Flinders Petrie, of whom his country may well be proud, instead of resting on his laurels, is with his wife devoting the remaining years of a great career to excavations on the Palestine side of the Egyptian frontier where the Hyksos have left ample traces of their presence. And as already indicated this Hyksos or Shepherd-King civilization is of the very first importance in connection with the early history of Genesis. Consideration of space alone prevents the mention of other excavators, but as will be seen, this little volume covers a long period of Bible history..

## II

### GEOGRAPHY

**I**T has not always been appreciated that the events recorded in the Old Testament have a strictly correct geographical background. The ideas that we acquire when children as to the character and size of Canaan and its cities are sometimes exaggerated, but the Palestine and Mesopotamia campaigns in the Great War, demonstrated the accuracy of the Bible geography.

There are, however, certain geographical and ethnological features of the Promised Land which need emphasis for the understanding of the Old Testament. The country is less than one hundred and fifty miles in length, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south, and it constitutes the connecting land link between Europe and Asia on the one hand, and Africa on the other. In the days of Joshua, the splendid civilization of Egypt lay to the south, to the north that of Syria, and beyond Asia Minor and Europe; while, branching away from Syria eastwards, were the vast civilizations of Mesopotamia. These countries were all intersected by roads, and, alike for invaders or for traders—and there seems to have been plenty of



foreign trade in old times—all roads connected through Palestine.

But the grand highway through Canaan was along what might be called the coastland corridor—a strip of comparatively flat and very fertile country, extending some ten to fifteen miles inland, parallel with the Mediterranean. It will be seen on reference to our map that this strip begins at Gaza in the south, and runs due north for about one hundred miles, until it is blocked by the great mass of Mount Carmel.

The country parallel with this coastland corridor, and between it and the Jordan Valley, is about thirty miles wide, and constitutes the highlands. It was among these hills and mountains that the tribes of Israel settled after the conquest by Joshua, all except the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh, who recrossed the Jordan and occupied the land on the east side in what is now Transjordan. This is a less known and less explored region of the country. It is a land of ascents and descents, of high hills and deep valleys, at the bottom of which run streams that flow into the Jordan. This country borders on the desert, and along its border ran an important trade route to which reference will be made at the end of this chapter.

This brief picture of Canaan needs to be supplemented by reference to the great plain of Esdraelon in the north which cuts across the high-



lands beyond Mount Carmel as far as the Jordan Valley. Still farther north rises Mount Tabor and beyond that the Lake of Galilee.

Returning to the south, on the east side of the highlands, lies the plain of Jericho and the Dead Sea. Palestine is only about the size of Wales, and these highlands often resemble the wildest parts of the principality. But it has one peculiar feature most marked and most impressive, which, while it enters into the background of Bible history, is quite often unappreciated by the vast number of Bible readers who have not visited the country, although it is so closely associated with prophecies of the future. We refer to the great rift cutting through the country from north to south, and to the fact that the bottom of this rift runs a long way below the sea-level of the Mediterranean. The rift begins above the Lake of Galilee. How many readers of the New Testament there must be who fail to realize that this sheet of water, on whose shores so much of Christ's work was done, is itself no less than seven hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean. Thence the Jordan flows down through the rift for sixty-five miles, until it enters the north end of the Dead Sea. And the Dead Sea itself, with the adjacent plain of the Jordan on which Jericho stands, is thirteen hundred feet below the Mediterranean. In contrast to this deep depression, little more than thirty miles west of it, in the direction of

the Mediterranean, stands Jerusalem, no less than twenty-four hundred feet above sea-level, surrounded by other hills of varying heights. Students of the Palestine campaign of Lord Allenby in the Great War, will remember how his army entered the country from Egypt; and how Gaza on the west, and Jericho on the east, became bases from which the invasion of the country was made.

As will be noticed in the course of this narrative, the Gaza route was the one traversed by the ancient Egyptian armies in the course of their various invasions of Syria. Conversely, down that coastland corridor from the north came Egypt's invaders. The route's proximity to the Mediterranean offered great advantages to whoever possessed control of the sea, and this fact probably had an important bearing upon some of the events referred to in succeeding chapters.

Let us glance at some of those nations to the north of Palestine who certainly used this coastland corridor with advantage ages before and after Joshua.

For two hundred miles the coast of Syria was peopled by the Phœnicians, concerning whom a good deal will be found in these pages. Long before the time of Joshua these people had become a great seafaring race. How they must have used that ancient seaport of Old Gaza which Sir Flinders Petrie is now excavating! The Phœnicians, so

their records say, were originally responsible for the nautical activity of the Greeks and other dwellers in the coastlands and islands of the Mediterranean. One of their protégés appear to have been the Philistines, or Pulasati, those armor-clad warriors that figure so prominently in the Books of Judges and Samuel, and whose penetration and power caused the land of Canaan to be called Palestine.

To the north, beyond Syria, was the great empire of the Hittites. It has been suggested that these people were of European origin, and connect up with the Trojans of Homer. Associated with them are the people of Mitanni who, about the time of Joshua, were ruled by an Indo-European Dynasty. Their deities appear to have been Indra, Varuna, and other Indian deities. They seem to constitute the Aryan link with India and Europe in ancient times.

In the tenth chapter of Genesis there is a description of the sons of Noah and their descendants. It appears to be a document of extreme antiquity and represents the original dispersions of the sons of Noah. Speaking roughly we judge that Shem's descendants were originally settled in Asia and Arabia, Ham's in Asia Minor and Africa, and Japheth's in Europe. Thus, from this ancient aspect, Canaan became the meeting ground of all the descendants of Noah—a fit stage, indeed, for the greatest drama of humanity.

Beside the coastland corridor on the west of Palestine, an important trade route ran along the eastern border of the land from remote time. This caravan road came down from Damascus in the north and ran due south through the Hauran: it passed some distance east of the Dead Sea, and continued south past Mount Seir to the Gulf of Akaba, which is an arm of the Red Sea.

Here let our readers refresh their memory with a glance at any Bible map of the Sinai peninsula. They will notice that the north end of the Red Sea ends in two arms or gulfs—the western one being the Gulf of Suez, which the Suez Canal now connects with the Mediterranean; the eastern one is the Gulf of Akaba to which reference has just been made. Incidentally, it should be noted that between these two gulfs is the Sinai peninsula, in the center of which rises the sacred mountain of Sinai, the traditional spot whence the Law was delivered unto Moses.

Opposite the Peninsula of Sinai, on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Akaba, is the country of Midian, to which Moses fled for refuge when he was about forty years old. More will be said about Midian when we come to the life of Moses. Meantime let it be noted that it is bounded on the north by Lat.  $29^{\circ} 29'$  and on the south by Lat.  $27^{\circ} 39'$ . In other words it extends from the head of the Gulf of Akaba, and down the eastern shore of the Red Sea for two hundred miles or so in all. It did not,

however, include the Peninsula of Sinai. To-day it forms part of the Hedjaz of Arabia.

For many years the author has been endeavoring to glean further information regarding this district; but the region is little known, and still rather inaccessible. It seems likely that a motor road will shortly be completed from Egypt to Akaba but in the spring of 1933 it was not ready for use. And the exploration of the eastern shore of the Gulf seemed quite out of the question.

Information about this coast seems to be becoming important for a correct understanding of the early Old Testament background. The legendary site of Ophir is laid either in South Arabia, or even in Africa, and there is little doubt that in the days of King Solomon, the precious metal was brought up the Red Sea to the head of the Gulf, known in the Old Testament as Ezion-geber. At an even earlier date Ezion-geber is mentioned in connection with the wanderings of the children of Israel in the Wilderness.

Thus the trade-route from Damascus to the Red Sea, and so to the Indian Ocean, along the borders of eastern Palestine, was always of great importance. Where this road passes through the Hauran, are the remains of cities that flourished in the period 2500-1600 B. C.

Before concluding this chapter a further reference should be made to the great rift or Jordan Valley. In places it is still somewhat inaccessible

and, at any rate, on its eastern side it needs further examination and exploration. Some commentators have assumed that its barren soil and sultry atmosphere, have always existed in this deep canyon; but recent examinations testify to the fact that it was once a most fertile part of the country.

The cataclysm which overwhelmed Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain, now submerged beneath the waters of the Dead Sea, seems to have changed the climate, at any rate, at the lower end of the valley. So Jericho, though a delightful place in winter, becomes unendurably hot in summer; and similar climatic conditions prevail higher up the Jordan.

During recent years, however, the distinguished American archæologist, Dr. W. F. Albright, has explored the district, and found ample evidence that the most prosperous period of the rift was before 2000 B. C. The new Bible chronology which will be set down later on in this book, indicates that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah occurred about 2061 B. C. The significance of Dr. Albright's discovery will be appreciated when we come to consider the stories of the life of Abraham.

The author himself has recently been interested in some research work at Pella, in the Jordan Valley, where there are remains going back to great antiquity. A reference to this spot in connection with Joshua will be made later in this



work, but it is really chiefly interesting from its primitive Christian settlement. It was to Pella that the early Christians fled for refuge when Titus and his Romans besieged Jerusalem in A. D. 70. In this remote spot, protected by all manner of rock shelters, caves, and subterranean passages, as yet unexplored, they were saved from the slaughter which attended the destruction of Jerusalem.

### III

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

**H**ISTORY tells us that the Romans conquered England, and added it to their Empire, some forty or fifty years after Christ. In various parts of the country, usually about two feet below the surface, are the remains of four centuries of Roman civilization to testify to the correctness of this history.

In like manner beneath the surface of the soil, in Palestine and Syria, in Mesopotamia and Egypt, are ample remains of a far older civilization to testify to the correctness of Old Testament history.

Viewed as a whole, the evidence is most impressive. When details are examined, it is more difficult, because account must be taken of the incompleteness of our knowledge. The failure to recognize this obvious fact has been a discreditable feature in many modern Bible commentaries. If there had been no evidence of ancient Bible civilization, such, for example, as that outlined in the Book of Genesis, there might have been justification. But our readers will soon note that there is any amount of evidence. What the Romans left

behind them in England, seems trifling to what those who lived in the days of Abraham have left behind them in Mesopotamia. In England, there are a few Latin inscriptions on tombstones, or of a dedicatory character from the ruins of public buildings, or on ancient milestones, and that is about all the writing left by the Romans in Britain.

But in Mesopotamia, and in other Bible lands, excavators have been finding whole libraries of clay tablets, covered with writing, in the cuneiform or wedge-shaped characters, and in other scripts; and there must be plenty more still beneath the soil. For the present, the problem appears to be rather more a matter of decipherment, dating, classification, and interpretation, of the quantities of clay documents already found, than looking for more of them. But alas! the world possesses far too few scholars for this class of work. If all the time wasted on minute dissection of the Bible text—on straining at gnats and swallowing camels—had been spent in learning to read cuneiform tablets, there would be a far clearer knowledge of ancient history to-day, than at present is the case. But the discernment, skill, patience and perseverance, required for this kind of work, render this form of scholarship a far from popular one, at any rate in England. So decipherers are few, and we are forced to depend much on German scholarship. Without wishing to depreciate the fine work of other countries in this im-

portant branch of research, it is essential that more attention should be given to it in the universities of England and America. What is the use of teaching students an ancient history of the world, still largely based on conjecture, when there are in existence original contemporary documents to tell us what the people of Abraham's day studied, or the people of Moses' time believed; what were their customs; how they bought and sold; what laws their rulers made, how long they reigned, and what they did?

For the purposes of this book, it is only necessary to enumerate some of the sources of information of this character, such as the cuneiform tablets found in Mesopotamia—at Nippur, by the University of Pennsylvania's Expeditions, or at Kish and Jemdet Nasr by Dr. Langdon, with the aid of the Field Museum at Chicago.

Let us also recall the fact that as long ago as A. D. 1887, a group of cuneiform tablets was found among the ruins of Tel el Amarna, in Egypt. These had been written by the petty Kings of Syria and Palestine between B. C. 1400–1360 and sent to two Pharaohs, whose reigns cover this period. These letters acquire new importance in the light of the evidence from the Jericho excavations recorded later.

Then in 1906–7, Dr. Winckler found a royal Hittite library, at Boghaz Keui, in Asia Minor, about one hundred and fifty miles inland south of

Sinope, a port on the south shore of the Black Sea. This collection of cuneiform and other tablets, when discovered, appear to have been beautifully arranged in pigeonholes, and classified. The tablets were removed to Berlin, and it was only after the commencement of the Great War that Dr. F. Hrozný discovered that the language in which some of them were written, was related to the Indo-European group. The task of deciphering and correlating these tablets is still going on, and their publication will obviously modify and affect present knowledge.

There are frequent references to the Hittites in the Old Testament, and although this race belonged to the northern part of Asia Minor, yet we read of Abraham purchasing the cave of Machpelah as a burial-place from a Hittite family, and Machpelah is close to Hebron in southern Palestine. Again: the prophet Ezekiel, inveighing against the wickedness of Jerusalem in his day, reminds the city that it was founded by Amorites and Hittites—a further testimony to the presence of the latter in southern Palestine, even before the days of Abraham.

As far back as 1905, Sir Flinders Petrie undertook an expedition into the peninsula of Sinai, the traditional scene of the wanderings of the Israelites under Moses. On the top of one of its mountains he explored the ruins of a Semitic temple, of which more will be written in a later chapter. The

purpose of this allusion is to direct attention to the fact that here Sir Flinders discovered the earliest alphabetical writing yet known. Much of it had been destroyed by gross acts of vandalism; and the decipherment of the fragments that remain has been a slow and precarious task for scholars. A recent publication assigned a date of about B. C. 1850-1800 to these writings.

Some three years ago, the excavation of a mound on the coast of northern Syria, opposite the island of Cyprus, led to a discovery of immense importance. The mound proved to contain the ruins of a small temple, in the basement of which a small library of inscribed clay-tablets were brought to light. The place where this treasure trove was discovered is called Ras Shamra. The tablets were written in the cuneiform script, some in conventional Babylonian, others in the Sumerian or priestly language. But more important still were others, written in a script which consisted of only twenty-seven different characters, as compared with the several hundred involved combinations of the older Babylonian syllabary. It was obvious that the ancient cuneiform writing-signs had been used for the purpose of recording an alphabetical script; and the fact that the characters were twenty-seven in number suggested a language of twenty-seven letters. The problem was how to decipher it.

In Edgar Allan Poe's story, *The Gold Bug*, there

is a description of the decipherment of a cryptogram. In more recent years, Conan Doyle, the creator of the Sherlock Holmes detective stories, makes his hero solve the cryptogram of *The Dancing Men*, by employing methods similar to those described in Poe's story. Now the alphabetical cuneiform writing found at Ras Shamra, was really nothing more nor less than a cryptogram; and by using Poe's method, Professor Bauer, of Halle, discovered which letters of the alphabet were represented by each of the twenty-seven different characters.

The language proved to be archaic Hebrew; and the date of the tablets has been provisionally fixed at B. C. 1400-1350. Only a portion of these tablets have yet been deciphered, so it is hazardous to base definite conclusions upon them. But it is already quite clear that they connect up with the worship of the Israelites in the wilderness, as instituted by Moses. Frequent reference will be made to these Ras Shamra tablets in succeeding pages. On the other hand the actual finds of cuneiform tablets, among the ruined sites of Palestine, have, up to the present, been few and far between; but allusions will be made in the pages that follow to isolated examples, which contain evidence of importance.

Our readers are doubtless aware that writing in Egypt in the form of hieroglyphics goes back to an extremely ancient time, and that scholars are

well versed in this type of writing. Quantities of it exist which deal with all periods of Egyptian history, and much of it has been deciphered and published during the past fifty years. Sir Flinders Petrie has expressed the opinion that, in some respects, we know more about the Egyptian history of ancient times, than we do about Anglo-Saxon history during the period that followed England's evacuation by the Romans.

It is highly probable that, as the varieties of Bible evidence, now revealed, come to be studied and correlated, and previous unsound assumptions and conclusions are consigned to the limbo of forgotten things, it may be found that both Joseph and Moses can be identified with characters already known in Egyptian history.

Another class of evidence, which is of great value, is that supplied through the excavation of the ruined sites themselves. Apart from the broken pottery and scarabs (which will be dealt with later), inscriptions are being sometimes found, and potsherds, on which are scraps of writing.

Once again: there is the evidence furnished by ancient walls, or the contents of the interior of houses and palaces. As will be seen, Ur of the Chaldees, and Old Gaza, have yielded much valuable information in this respect. So did the excavations made outside Jerusalem in 1925-6-7, by the Palestine Exploration Fund, with which the author was associated. There was found the re-



mains of the old Jebusite city of Jerusalem, with its wall twenty-four feet in thickness. But the pride of place belongs to Jericho, whose fallen walls, and burnt, but unplundered interior, gave remarkable confirmation to the Bible story of its capture and destruction.

And now let us turn to another class of evidence of their own time left by those who lived when Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Joshua walked the earth. It should be borne in mind that this new class of evidence—the evidence, that is, of the potsherds or broken pieces of earthenware—has really only been available during the past eight years. The tourist who visits the Holy Land soon becomes aware of the fact that it is studded with the sites of small ruined cities, and they in turn, both above and below the present surface of the soil, are littered with fragments of pottery. They must have been great users and good breakers of pots, these ancient Amorites and Canaanites, and all the rest of them! And the Israelites, when they came upon the scene, did their share in this construction and destruction of earthenware.

In the course of several thousands of years of civilization, which the country has enjoyed, its little cities with their great outer walls of defence, have been destroyed and rebuilt again and again. Usually the same site has been chosen, and ruins

of the previous occupation have been leveled and used for the foundation of the next city, and so on. Thus the excavator finds layer upon layer of pottery fragments, one underneath the other, each layer marking some fresh occupation and destruction.

Now though the fashions in earthenware in old times were not so variable as are ladies' hats and dresses to-day, still, in the course of centuries there were developments and changes and importations from abroad. It was Sir Flinders Petrie who was the first to appreciate the possibilities of using the variations of pottery for chronological purposes. And to make a long story short, since the Great War these variations have been classified, and dates assigned to them. The dates have principally been obtained with the aid of Egyptian scarabs found among the layers of fragments. These scarabs, or seals, have inscribed upon them the names of Pharaohs whose dates are known. Since the year 1925, and largely through the excavation of Beth-Shan, a city in the north of Palestine, occupied as a strategic post by the Egyptians, from about B. C. 1480 to 1200, it has been considered possible to identify, and to date, the periods of occupation of a particular site, from the different layers of potsherds upon it. So the chronology and, to some extent, the history of a mound of ruins can be reconstructed; not, of course, without other evidence to a specific year, or two years, or even

ten, but to, perhaps in certain instances, a quarter of a century.

Readers will be spared further technical details about ancient potsherds, except that the classes into which they have been divided and dated are as follows:

The Early Bronze Age	. 2500-2000 B. C.
The Middle Bronze Age	. 2000-1600 B. C.
The Late Bronze Age	. 1600-1200 B. C.

For purposes of comparison with the above, the dates of some Bible events for which evidence will be cited in later chapters, are as follows:

The Flood	. . . . . Prior to 2500 B. C.
Abraham	. . . . . 2160-1985 B. C.
The Israelites' sojourn in Egypt	1870-1440 B. C.
The Exodus, and the wandering in the Wilderness	. . . 1440-1400 B. C.
The Fall of Jericho	. . . 1400 B. C.
The Conquest of Canaan	. 1400-1360 B. C.
Period of the Judges	. . . 1360-1018 B. C.
Reign of Saul, David and three years of Solomon	. . . 1018- 957 B. C.
Founding of Solomon's Temple	957 B. C.

These dates are based upon the date of the Fall of Jericho, which Professor Garstang places at 1407 B. C., or seven years earlier. In like manner the founding of Solomon's Temple has been placed in 967 B. C. by some authorities. So a margin of

ten years should be allowed. Thus the evidence cited places the Exodus between 1447-1437 B. C.

Other, and most important evidence, for dating purposes are the scarabs, which may be said to resemble the seals on finger rings. They emanate from Egypt, and are relics of Egyptian relations with Canaan, to which frequent references are made in the succeeding chapters. When the scarabs are found engraved with the cartouche of a Pharaoh, they give excellent indications of the date of a particular site, or of a particular stratum of pottery. As will be seen, the scarabs discovered in Jericho's tombs, have been an invaluable confirmation of the pottery system of dating.

## IV

### PRIMEVAL RELIGION AND THE FLOOD

**T**HE scene of the events recorded in the earlier chapters of the Book of Genesis appears to be laid in the neighborhood of the river Euphrates. The surrounding country is called the land of Shinar, or the land of the Chaldees, or Mesopotamia. We have known it as Babylonia; to-day, it is styled the kingdom of Iraq.

It is a land of sandy deserts through which the great Euphrates flows down to the Persian Gulf. But the deserts are studded with the ruins of ancient cities, and seared with the channels of old irrigation canals; the sand has submerged all.

X Beneath the surface, excavations reveal the remains of a vast civilization, reaching back more than five thousand years before the time of Christ. These evidences of an age, until lately almost forgotten, have been left by two great peoples—the Sumerians, and the Semites. The latter take their name from Shem, the eldest son of Noah, and the Hebrew race, from which Abraham sprang, was a branch of this people.

The confident tone adopted by some modern writers of ancient history, tends to create the im-

pression that everything is already known about these very ancient times. That is an entirely wrong conception. For example, Petrie dates the third and fourth dynasties of Egypt—the pyramid builders—from 3838 to 3510 B. C.; while another distinguished Egyptologist dates these two dynasties from about 3000 to 2750 B. C., a difference of seven hundred and fifty years. There must be any amount of evidence which remains to be uncovered; and as human knowledge concerning it is enlarged, the apparently assured facts of but a few years ago, become the proven fiction of to-day.

It would appear to be quite insecure to embark upon confident conjectures. But what *does* emerge from this twilight-time of history is the fact that already its cuneiform clay-tablets and pictures testify to the earlier chapters of the Book of Genesis. Which is not to say that they furnish the irrefutable truth of these chapters; but they do suggest the probability that under different names, and in perhaps another theological setting, the children of Abraham's time were taught similar stories about the Creation, the Temptation, the Death of Abel, the Patriarchs before the Flood, and of the Deluge itself, such as appear in our own Bible. Do we all realize this?

But the outstanding feature of all this remote civilization in its relation to the Bible is the evidence it affords that monotheism (the belief in one supreme God) preceded polytheism, or the belief

in many gods. This is the very careful and deliberate conclusion of Dr. Langdon, Professor of Assyriology at Oxford, probably the greatest living authority on cuneiform literature, and this very remote period of civilization. It is a conclusion of such far-reaching importance that there hardly seems to be a modern book written about the Old Testament, or ancient history, or archæology in Bible lands, which remains unaffected by it.

It would seem as though nearly all modern writers on these subjects, have been so hypnotized by the theory of evolution, as to have been led to place an entirely wrong emphasis on the evidence with which they have dealt; and, in some cases at least, to have misunderstood its significance altogether.

Dr. Einstein's discovery of relativity rendered all previous books on physics obsolete. It seems hardly too much to say that in like fashion, Dr. Langdon's discovery that monotheism was the original religion, has had a similar effect on all books that refer to ancient faiths.

In view of the importance of this discovery, let us take some brief references from Dr. Langdon's book *Semitic Mythology* (vol. 5 in the series, *The Mythology of all Races*, published by the Archæological Institute of America, Marshall Jones Company, Boston), and used by permission. In his Introduction (p. xviii) Dr. Langdon says:

"I may fail to carry conviction in concluding that, both in Sumerian and Semitic religions, monotheism preceded polytheism and belief in good and evil spirits. The evidence and reasons for this conclusion, so contrary to accepted and current views, have been set down with care and with the perception of adverse criticism. It is, I trust, the conclusion of knowledge and not of audacious pre-conception."

It will be remembered that in our opening chapter, a modern writer is quoted as *assuming* that the Hebrew religion passed through a period of animism and polytheism before it arrived at monotheism. In contradiction of this theory, we quote the following passage (p. 11):

"Although the South Arabians and Accadians are far advanced beyond the primitive Bedouin stage in the periods when the inscriptions begin, their history shows that it is characteristic of the Semites to use animal names in times of advanced culture, when there is no possible influence of primitive totemism. *I therefore reject the totemistic theory absolutely.* Early Canaanitish and Hebrew religions are far beyond primitive totemism (if it ever existed among them) in the period when any definite information can be obtained about them . . . all Semitic tribes appear to have started with a single tribal deity whom they regarded as the Divine Creator of his people."

Later on (p. 93), Dr. Langdon writes:



“The Semitic word for God meant originally ‘He who is High,’ a sky god; and here also I believe that their religion began with monotheism; they probably worshipped El, Ilah, as their first Deity.”

Since Dr. Langdon’s book was written, the cuneiform alphabetical script tablets found at Ras Shamra on the coast of Syria, have supplied ample evidence that with all their polytheism, El was the supreme Deity, and particularly the supreme Deity of Canaan.

Elsewhere in this notable book, Dr. Langdon quotes the statement of Sanchuniathon, a Phœnician sage of about 1000 B. C., but quoting from far earlier sources, that the principal Deity of Gebal (Byblus) was Elioun, and that he was called Hypsistos—or Most High.

It is obvious that this Elioun is the same as “El Elyon” of Genesis xiv, translated “God Most High” in the Authorized (King James) Version. As a result of his excavations at Kish Dr. Langdon writes: (*Field Museum Leaflet 28*)

“In my opinion, the history of the oldest religion of man is a rapid decline from monotheism to extreme polytheism and wide-spread belief in evil spirits. It is in a very true sense the history of the fall of man.”

Such is a well-considered verdict derived from a study of this ancient Mesopotamian literature.

And now the Ras Shamra tablets have come on the scene to suggest that Sanchuniathon's writings were genuine, and in other respects to endorse the correctness of Dr. Langdon's deductions.

It seems hardly necessary to remind our readers how well this religious atmosphere of the twilight of ancient history accords with the narrative contained in the earlier chapters of the Book of Genesis.

Before the evolutionary theory of religion came to prejudice the evidence of religious beliefs derived from other ancient civilizations, there seems to have been a tendency to come to the same conclusion as that now reached by Dr. Langdon. Thus, Sir Peter Le Page Renouf, the translator of the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, wrote:

"M. de Rouge then says that from, or rather before, the beginning of the historical period, the pure monotheistic religion passed through the phase of Sabeism. . . . It is therefore more than five thousand years since, in the valley of the Nile, the hymn began to the Unity of God and the immortality of the soul. . . . The belief in the Unity of the Supreme God and in HIS attributes as Creator and Lawgiver—these are the primitive notions enchased like indestructible diamonds in the midst of the mythological superfetations accumulated in the centuries."

Sir Peter's comment (*The Hibbert Lectures*, 1879) on this quotation is:

“It is incontestably true that the sublimer portions of the Egyptian religion are not the comparatively late result of a process of development or elimination from the grosser.”

The ancient Chinese records also supply evidence of original monotheism. In other countries indications seem much the same. Thus the Greek dramatist Æschylus is reported to have said:

“Zeus is the ether, Zeus the earth, Zeus the  
heaven,  
Zeus is the Universe and what is beyond the  
Universe.”

When we further notice how Zeus Pater is the same as the Dyaus-Petar of ancient India; the same as the Jupiter of the Latin nations; and the same as the Tyr of the old Norse; the implication is strong that these several races all once had the same “Heaven Father”; the same monotheistic Faith; which degenerated into polytheism, as in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China.

And now in that very year of 1931 which witnessed the publication of Dr. Langdon’s work, came another book containing similar conclusions from another science to that of Archæology.

The science of Anthropology and Comparative Religion studies the manners, and customs, and superstitions, and beliefs of the primitive or aboriginal races of the world. We are indebted to its leading authority for *The Origin and Growth of*

*Religion—Facts and Theories* (Methuen, 1931). The conclusions reached by the author—Professor Schmidt of Vienna—in that volume, are derived from evidence collected all over the world. They testify to an universal belief in one Supreme Being, and an universal belief in a future life among the primitive peoples.

On this subject of a future life, the Mesopotamian tablets have revealed another piece of evidence of equal significance and importance to Old Testament students. As a result of his decipherment of these cuneiform inscriptions Dr. Langdon has reached the further conclusion that:

“The theological view running through Babylonia before 2000 B. C. was of a Heaven for the righteous, whom the Gods might choose to receive into Paradise where is the Bread and Water of Eternal Life.”

Before the time of Abraham then, *before* any book of the Old Testament was written; and right down through the centuries *after* every book in the Old Testament had been written, there existed this belief in a future life, and the presence of the bread and water of eternal life in heaven. The possession of this knowledge enhances the significance of Jesus Christ's statements in the New Testament:

“I am the bread of life” (John 6: 35). “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if

any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever " (John 5: 54). "The water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life " (John 4: 14).

Some, at least, of Christ's hearers would appreciate the allusions. The bread and water of life were no longer located in a far-away heaven reserved for the righteous; these gifts—the desire of all the ages—had been brought to earth for sinners to share.

The next archæological discovery in Mesopotamia to which attention must be drawn is the evidence of the Flood, both in the cuneiform writings and in the actual Flood deposits.

The cuneiform libraries appear to have contained ample accounts of, and references to, this catastrophe. A clay prism has also been found on which is inscribed the names of the ten kings who reigned before the Flood, and these correspond to the ten patriarchs mentioned in the fifth chapter of the Book of Genesis. These ten patriarchs also figure under various names in the mythology of other ancient civilizations, such as the Sumerian, the Greek, the Phœnician, and the Indian, as well as the Hebrew.

The deposits of the Flood were found almost simultaneously by Dr. Langdon's 1928-1929 expedition at Kish near Babylon, and by Dr. Woolley excavating Ur of the Chaldees, a good deal farther south, about half-way between Baghdad

and the Persian Gulf. The excavations at Kish have revealed two distinct flood strata, the one nineteen feet below the other. Dr. Langdon associates the Ur deposits with the lower level of Kish. He reports that Babylonian and Assyrian scribes frequently refer to the age "before the Flood." One king praises himself as one "who loved to read the writings of the age before the Flood."

The account of Dr. Woolley in *Ur of the Chaldees*<sup>1</sup> of the Ur discovery runs as follows:

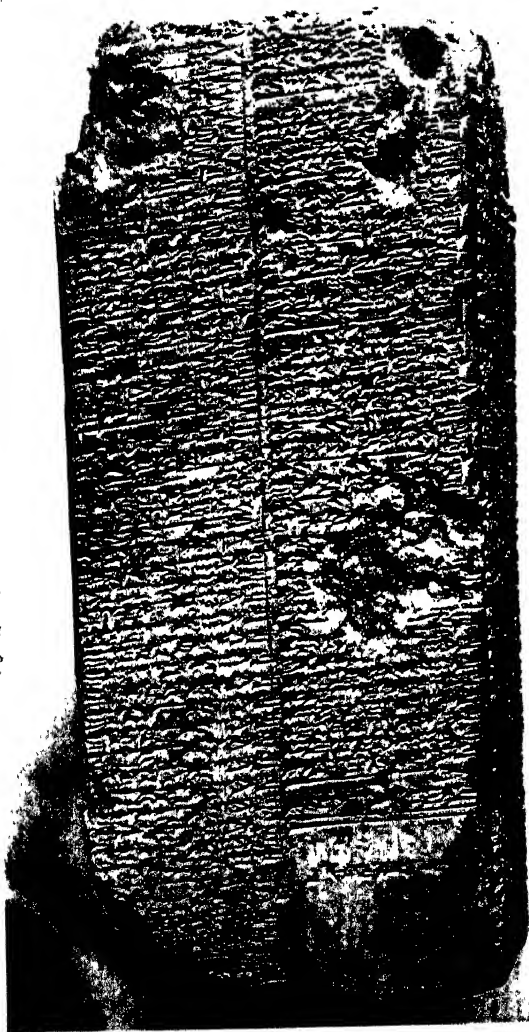
"The shafts went deeper and suddenly the character of the soil changed. Instead of the stratified pottery and rubbish we were in perfectly clean clay, uniform throughout, the texture of which showed that it had been laid there by water. The workmen declared we had come to the bottom of everything, to the river silt. . . . I sent the men back to deepen the hole. The clean clay continued without change until it had attained a thickness of a little over eight feet. Then, as suddenly as it had begun, it stopped, and we were once more in layers of rubbish full of stone implements and pottery. . . . The great bed of clay marked, if it did not cause a break in, the continuity of history; above it we had the pure Sumerian civilization slowly developing on its own lines; below it there was a mixed culture . . . no ordinary rising of the rivers would leave behind it anything approaching the bulk of this clay bank; eight feet of sediment imply a very great depth of water, and the flood which deposited it must have been of a magnitude

<sup>1</sup> Chas. Scribners Sons. Used by permission.

unparalleled in local history. That it was so is further proved by the fact that the clay bank marks a definite break in the continuity of the local culture; a whole civilization which existed before it is lacking above it and seems to have been submerged by the waters . . . there could be no doubt that the flood was the Flood of Sumerian history and legend, the flood on which is based the story of Noah."

These interesting accounts while testifying to the reality of the Flood, leave us somewhat uncertain as to its extent. It is true that most races have legends of a great deluge, even if it seem hard to believe that it was of a universal character; or again that an ark once contained all that was left of humanity, birds, beasts and reptiles. Calculations have been made by sailors which suggest that the ark must have been about the size of the Isle of Wight. But so far as one can interpret the actual measurements given in the Bible, it was not longer than some of our modern steamships.

The actual date of the Flood is also a difficult question. Inscriptions found both above and below the level of the upper Kish flood, date it at about 3300 B. C. Dr. Langdon dates the lower level back to 4000 B. C. On the other hand, the Hebrew text of Genesis implies that Abraham was born only two hundred ninety-two years after the Flood. Estimates made on this basis would place the Flood



FINE CUNEIFORM PRISM OF BAKED CLAY

Said to be the most important document in cuneiform literature, containing entire Sumerian list of dynasties before and after the flood down to 2076 B.C. The names of those before the flood correspond with the names of the ten patriarchs mentioned in Genesis.

*(Courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.)*





at about 2400 B. C. The Septuagint version of Genesis (translated into Greek from the Hebrew about 300 B. C.) represents Abraham as being born 1072 years after the Flood, which would bring the date up to about 3200 B. C.

The use of the name Semitic (*i. e.*, descendant of Shem, one of the sons of Noah) presupposes a connection with events *after* the Flood, since on this basis there could have been no Semites before the Deluge. Of the reality of the Flood there can, of course, be no question; it is repeatedly referred to on cuneiform tablets.

The actual cuneiform accounts of the Deluge have so often been quoted and compared with the Bible narrative, that they can no longer be treated as new knowledge. That they are related to the Bible account is obvious; and we may reasonably infer from Dr. Langdon's remarks on the original religion, that the polytheistic character of the cuneiform accounts stamps them as a corrupted version of the narrative. The Genesis account, because it is monotheistic, is probably derived from the original version. This seems a logical inference from Dr. Langdon's discovery. It is of course true that a monotheistic account of Noah's flood, written in cuneiform, has not yet been found; or if found, not yet deciphered and published. But the wealth of material is so great, decipherment is so slow, and so much more must still be buried in the many unexplored areas, that no adverse con-

clusion is possible. It may indeed be that our generation have only reached the fringe of the knowledge which those who lived before and after Abraham have left behind them.

With what is now known, we fancy we can dimly perceive the grouping of Noah's descendants immediately after the Flood. But as yet there seem no clear conclusions from archæological evidence concerning events that happened immediately after the Flood. We must remember that it is only within the last five years that the Flood has been brought into the region of reality. And the mistake about the original religion has created confusion.

The three sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and the genealogies of their descendants, are set down in the tenth chapter of the book of Genesis.

Many commentators have in the past agreed that the various names are geographical connections rather than ethnological relations, in other words that this chapter outlines maps and not pedigrees. This assumption seems to ignore the natural initial tendency of first the members of the same family, and then those of the same race, to keep together. Assuming that the dispersal was as real an event as the Flood, is there anything unnatural about the statements in Genesis 10? Historically the period is very obscure, and it is only safe to generalize. When the panorama of races is

viewed as a whole backwards towards these remote times, there seem to emerge three main groups of races that have always inhabited the world. It is also not without significance that the neighborhood of the Caucasus Mountains should be indicated by historians in our own times, as well as by relics of remote times, for the original homeland of our own, and many other races. That is just about where the Bible tells us Noah's ark came to rest.

The migration of the three sons of Noah would appear to have originally been: south in the case of Shem, south and southwest in that of Ham, and west in that of Japheth. In other words, Shem's descendants went to Arabia and the Persian Gulf, Ham's occupied Asia Minor and Africa, and Japheth's migrated towards Europe and the southern shores of the Black Sea. But it will be noticed in the narrative of Genesis 10 that the so-called descendants of Ham were the first to develop under the leadership of Nimrod, and to found cities in the land of Shinar, and of Assyria. It may be that these were the Sumerians who inherited the great civilization which existed before the Flood. Ham's son Mizraim has been identified with Egypt, while a portion of his race are also located in southern Arabia in places which are named in the genealogy of Shem.

Reference has already been made to Genesis 9, and to the primitive curse placed upon Ham's son Canaan, by which he and his children became

servants to the descendants of both Shem and Japheth in Syria and Palestine. And it has already been pointed out these two countries became the meeting ground of all the descendants of Noah.

If we assume that the effect of the Flood was to restore some sort of monotheism, it is interesting to consider whether the evidences of that religion, in both the Sumerian and Semitic races, as well as in the Egyptian religion, and in the European races, afford evidence that they all originally sprung from Noah. This association of religious ideas seems to suit the conditions postulated after the Flood, and expressed in the text: "The whole earth was of one language and one speech" (Gen. 11: 1). And it accords with the confusion of deities, as well as tongues, that followed. Interesting efforts have been made to prove that all languages can ultimately be traced to one source. That is a subject which cannot be examined within the limits of this volume.

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## V

### THE COMING OF THE SHEPHERD KINGS

THOSE of our readers acquainted with the outlines of Egyptian history, will recall that before the advent of the eighteenth dynasty, Egypt was ruled, for an uncertain period of time, by a mysterious race called the Hyksos, which the Egyptian historian Manetho says means "Shepherd Kings." A great deal has been learned about these people through the excavations of the last five years. And whereas the Hyksos used to belong to Egyptian history alone, it has now become evident that they also ruled Syria and Palestine for an even longer time than they ruled Egypt.

According to the Egyptian historian Manetho, the Hyksos possessed Egypt for five hundred and eleven years. Modern German critics have seriously questioned such a long period of time, and reduced it to about one hundred years. Needless to say, other writers have followed their example! It is difficult to see how correct history can be written at all, when there is such flagrant disregard of old historians. After all Manetho lived some two thousand years nearer the Hyksos times than our modern critics live. Moreover, it seems

quite improbable that an Egyptian historian would magnify what was to him a shameful period of Egyptian history.

It has been already mentioned in Chapter I that Sir Flinders Petrie has been excavating Hyksos sites on the borders of Egypt and Palestine for the last seven years, at such places as Gerar, and Bethpheet, and now at Old Gaza. It was also Sir Flinders who, years ago, discovered and excavated the great camp of Avaris in Egypt, the last stronghold of these Shepherd Kings before they were finally expelled by a native Egyptian dynasty. Of all Egyptologists he must be regarded as being most familiar with the evidence left by the Hyksos, and he has established a personal contact with the remains of this civilization possessed by no other authority. Reinforced as his evidence is by Manetho, it seems idle for others any longer to contend that the Hyksos can be dismissed with a mere century of rule.

Driven inland up the Nile, the thirteenth, fourteenth and seventeenth dynasties of Egypt, embracing the period 2371-1583 B. C. appear to have been contemporary with the fifteenth and sixteenth dynasties. Sir Flinders is now satisfied from the scarabs, or seals, that he has found, engraved with the names of the Egyptian kings of the fifteenth and sixteenth dynasties, that these were all Hyksos. Thus their rule existed—beginning 2371 B. C.—for no fewer than seven hundred and eighty-eight

years. This more than substantiates Manetho, who, as an Egyptian, would naturally minimize the length of rule of invaders execrated in his writing; and this definite establishment of the Hyksos domination over Egypt for such a long period, must seriously react upon the ancient history of Palestine, as presented to the public by recent writers.

The landmarks the Shepherd Kings have left behind them, consist of a peculiar type of fortification. Whereas other races used upright walls, these people protected their settlements by sloping ramparts, or glacis, with ditches at the foot of them. Such characteristics were first found on the site of their stronghold Avaris (*Tel-el-Yahudiyeh*), in which the Egyptian historian Manetho says they made their last stand before their final expulsion from Egypt by the eighteenth dynasty. Similar systems of fortification have since been discovered, at Quatna in Syria, at Hazor in North Palestine by Garstang, at Shechem in central Palestine by Welter, at Debir or Kerjath Sephir by Albright, and in the older fortification of Jericho by Garstang. There must, of course, be added to this list the frontier fortress of Bethpheet and ancient Gaza. Excavations of other sites in Syria and Palestine will doubtless in due course add to this list. But sufficient has now been found to justify the conclusion that the Shepherd Kings conquered and occupied Syria and Palestine, as well as Egypt. That their period of occupation was as long, and



probably considerably longer, than their occupation of Egypt, is evidenced by the fact that it was through Syria and Palestine their invasion of Egypt was made; and according to Manetho, it was into Palestine that the remnants of these Shepherd Kings were driven on their final expulsion from Egypt.

In the light of his recent excavations at Old Gaza, Sir Flinders Petrie has come to the conclusion that the Hyksos were the first to introduce the horse to Egypt. It is probable that they originated the horses and chariots, which figure so often in the Old Testament, and that these weapons of warfare facilitated their conquest of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Now we reach the question—who were these Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings?

The word "Hyksos" means Royal Shasu, and the word "Shasu" in Egyptian always refers to the Bedouin or Arabs. Josephus, the Jewish historian, was an eye-witness of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus in A. D. 70. He wrote much about the Old Testament. Among other writings which have survived, are his Essays *contra Apion*. In these he calls the Shepherd Kings "our ancestors"—that is, of course, the ancestors of the tribe of Judah, one of the twelve tribes of Israel. All these twelve tribes were in turn descended from Abraham, who is designated in the Bible as "Abraham, the Hebrew" (Gen. 14: 13). Now since the Hyksos occupation of Egypt extended from 2371

to 1583 B. C., and as we have already stated (and shall later endeavor to prove) that Abraham was born about B. C. 2160, it is evident that when Josephus calls the Shepherd Kings "our ancestors," he refers not to the Israelites, but to their ancestors the Hebrews. We are all so accustomed to associate the Israelites with the Hebrews, that we overlook the fact that there were other Hebrews besides Abraham; and judging from Genesis 25: 2 other Hebrews that sprung from Abraham besides the Israelites.

The name "Hebrew" occurs again at a later period in the Book of Genesis. In those delightful stories about Joseph in Egypt, he too is designated as an Hebrew; and when he was brought before Pharaoh to interpret that king's dream, he is represented as saying: "Indeed, I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews" (Gen. 40: 15).

How came Canaan to be called the land of the Hebrews? The description could scarcely be derived from the residence there of Jacob and his twelve sons. It suggests that there were other Hebrews in Canaan, and probably a considerable number of them, besides Jacob and his children. It even suggests that the ruling race had not been Canaanites at all, but Hebrews.

Now let us return to another statement of the Jewish historian, Josephus, regarding these Shepherd Kings. He writes, "Some say they were Arabs." That, of course, goes to confirm the in-

terpretation of the word "Hyksos," to which allusion has already been made. Here it should be pointed out that both Hebrews and Arabs were Semites, in other words, they were branches of the various races descended from Noah's son Shem. And we shall shortly draw attention to evidence of the presence of Arabs speaking archaic Hebrew in South Palestine apparently before the days of Joseph.

The excavations at Old Gaza, to which fuller reference will be made in a succeeding chapter, reveal an advanced civilization in that city, or rather in the series of five cities which Sir Flinders Petrie has found superimposed one above the other. The first or lowest of these may date back as far as 3000 B. C., the third belongs to the period 2371-2111 B. C., the last only to the time when the Hyksos were expelled from Egypt.

In Chapter II, which deals with the geography of Palestine, reference has already been made to the fact that in the Great War, Lord Allenby invaded the country from Egypt, using Gaza on the west, and Jericho on the east, as his bases of operation. Conversely, it may be suggested that if Old Gaza was the base of operations from which the Hyksos invaded Egypt on the west, excavators might be able to find traces of them at Jericho on the east.

And this has proved to be the case. Professor Garstang's report of his final excavation of Jericho

in 1933, reveals the fact that beneath the city destroyed by Joshua, he has found the remains of three other cities superimposed on each other, with quantities of Hyksos scarabs in the Palace area, and in the tombs. He describes the wall of the oldest of these cities as being "built of large slabs of clay banded with thick layers of bituminous earth after a Babylonian fashion." In the next city also he found evidence of Babylonian influence, while to the third belonged the type of fortification identified with the Hyksos period. Before we endeavor to draw conclusions, two other pieces of evidence require our attention.

The first is from Old Gaza whose culture Sir Flinders Petrie describes as Elamite. To-day Elam is known as Persia. Excavations are just beginning to be made there. A few months ago illustrations of the marvelous bas-reliefs found on the walls of the palace of King Darius, at Persepolis, were published in this country and the announcement of the find of 20,000 cuneiform tablets. King Darius, of course, lived some centuries before Christ and a great many centuries after Abraham. But some of our leading archaeologists consider that modern Persia, formerly ancient Elam, was once the art center of the world; and that the superb art of the Greeks was all derived from that quarter. What possibilities, therefore, do excavations such as the above hold out for an increase in the world's knowledge! How

absurd was the confidence of those who wrote as if they knew all about ancient history!

In the previous chapter reference was made to the distribution of the descendants of Noah's three sons—Shem, Ham and Japheth—as recorded in Genesis 10. A further reference to this chapter will reveal the fact that Elam was the eldest son of Shem (Gen. 10: 22). By refreshing our memories with a glance at a map we observe that the country of Elam adjoins Babylonia, consequently there would be a close affinity between the culture of the two countries.

The other piece of evidence to which some allusion has already been made in this chapter, comes from the newly deciphered Ras Shamra tablets. Although these inscriptions were found some hundreds of miles north of Jericho, yet the writers of them represent themselves as Arabs coming from the Arabah or country south of Jericho. The time of this migration, so far as the writer is aware, has not yet been fixed by the French experts. But the mythology inscribed on the tablets refers to the birth of Shalem, the son of Terach, the Moon God, in the Wilderness of Kadesh, a locality familiar to us in connection with the wanderings of the Children of Israel under Moses.

Now this god Shalem obviously gave his name to Jerusalem or Uru-Salem, and as long ago as the time of Abraham we find a reference to Melchizedek king of Salem. It is reasonable therefore to

infer that the tradition of these Arabs speaking archaic Hebrew, but living in Syria in the days of Joshua, goes back to a time before Abraham when their ancestors were residing in the extreme south of Palestine. It is therefore reasonably apparent, that since Elamites, and Arabs, and Hebrews, were all descendants of Shem, we are getting very considerable evidence of Semitic occupation of Syria and Palestine, even before the days of Abraham.

For the moment let us leave Palestine and refer to the early history of Babylonia. Mention has already been made that its earliest inhabitants were Sumerians and Semites. The latter race began to come into prominence about 2800 B. C., and in the course of the next fifty years it produced the great conqueror Sargon of Agade. In his youth, Sargon was a priest in a Sumerian temple; he rose to be, perhaps, the first great military conqueror of the then known world. His date has been pretty definitely fixed by Dr. Langdon as B. C. 2752. He left behind him inscriptions from which we gather that he penetrated even to the Mediterranean and conquered North Syria. His successor, Naram Sin, certainly did so. Here then began the supremacy of the Semitic race which resulted in a long line of kings of Semitic origin sitting upon the throne of Babylonia and adjacent countries.

This great irruption of Semitic conquest absorbed the Sumerian Babylonian civilization. There is now evidence that it penetrated through

Palestine. The excavations at Old Gaza still in progress, and those at Jericho completed this year, supply this important information. Here on the borders of Egypt are relics of a very ancient civilization that is not Egyptian. Garstang at Jericho says the walls of even its first city, to which he assigns a date of from 2500 B. C., were built in Babylonian style. While Petrie at Old Gaza dates his first two cities even earlier, and describes the culture as Elamite. Through its geographical position at the south end of the coastland corridor leading to Egypt, and through its being also a seaport, Old Gaza was a far more important place than Jericho, as it was about twenty times the size.

All the evidence is not clear as to when the actual Hyksos occupation of Palestine began. Petrie at any rate would assign a date of about 2371 B. C., for these Shepherd Kings' conquest of Egypt. The Semitic Babylonian occupation of Palestine appears to have preceded the coming of the Shepherd Kings. There were thus two great streams of Semitic occupation, the former from the east and north, and the latter from Arabia in the south.

Looking on the evidence as a whole, it seems quite clear that those who brought the cuneiform system of writing and the Hebrew language into Palestine were Semites. In the course of their long occupation these Semites intermarried with the Canaanites and Amorites and the other inferior

races who were the earlier occupants of the land.

The Tel el Amarna cuneiform letters already mentioned testify to the permanence of this civilization. They were written by the petty kings of Palestine and Syria to the two Pharaohs who reigned in the period B. C. 1400-1360. It is significant that although Palestine and Syria had been completely conquered and ruled by the Egyptians for some eighty years before these letters were written, yet neither the Egyptian script, nor the Egyptian language, were used in addressing their Egyptian Suzerain.

The evidence of the Ras Shamra tablets suggests the use of archaic Hebrew by Arabs in South Palestine before B. C. 2100, and the descendants of these Arabs were still speaking that language far up the coast of Syria at the same time when the Tel el Amarna tablets were despatched to Egypt. To sum up the contents of this chapter, it has been recognized for some time that when Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees he left a country which had long been ruled by his race. But it is only now beginning to be realized that when he came into Canaan, he was in a country which had been invaded and occupied and traversed by others of his race on their way to the conquest of Egypt. It has been customary to compare the Hyksos with the Bedouin Arab: the traces he has left now suggest that he more nearly resembled the Saracen.



His was a Semitic aristocracy correctly described by Hyksos, or Royal Bedouin.

The land of Canaan takes its name from Canaan, the son of Ham, on whom a curse was placed by Noah: "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. . . . Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (Gen. 9: 25-27).

In the next chapter we read: "And Canaan begat Zidon his first born, and Heth, and the Jebusite and the Amorite . . . and the border of the Canaanites was from Zidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim even unto Lasha" (Gen. 10: 15-19).

These verses represent Canaanites, Amorites, etc., as servants to the sons of Shem and Japheth; and so they were.

The Babylonian cuneiform tablets record the fact that the very word Amurru, or Amorite, became a class name for laborers. A tablet found at Lagash actually specifies other and different nationalities in a list of workmen styled "Amurru" (*vide Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. i. 420).

Bible students must often have wondered how it came about that these fellahin races acquired the civilization and the power which they possessed by the time of Joshua. The very early conquest

of the country by the Semitic races would explain the phenomena. As already pointed out the conquerors found Canaan occupied by primitive native races, and they imposed upon them their language, and the arts and civilization originally acquired in Mesopotamia. Those Semites who settled in the country, or who were ultimately driven out of Egypt, became absorbed in these native races.

## VI

### THE ORIGIN OF THE PHœNICIANS

**O**UR readers will be aware of the highly important part this race played in ancient history about 600 B. C. They occupied the coastland in the north of Canaan and of Syria for about 200 miles; Tyre, Sidon, and Arvad, were their principal seaports. They were the navigators of the world in Bible times, and founded colonies. Carthage, on the coast of Africa, opposite Italy, was their great settlement; but they extended their colonization as far west as Tartessos in Spain; and they have left ample traces of their presence at Cadiz; whence they sailed their ships to Cornwall; and probably to other parts of Britain; and even, as will be suggested, to Ireland.

Their culture was of an advanced type, and the alphabet has been regarded as their invaluable contribution to civilization; but the original characters now seem to have come from Sinai. Such has been the current knowledge of the Phœnicians. The principal account of their origin was derived from Herodotus (430 B. C.), the celebrated Greek historian, on whom the world has had so much to rely for a knowledge of ancient history. Herodotus wrote:

“ This people, who had formerly dwelt on the shores of the Erythrean Sea, having migrated to the Mediterranean and settled in the parts which they now inhabit, began at once, they say, to adventure on long voyages freighting their vessels with the wares of Egypt and Assyria.”

The Erythrean Sea is generally taken to mean the Red Sea, but some would transfer the title to the Persian Gulf. On the whole the evidence seems to suggest that the Red Sea and its eastern arm the Gulf of Akaba is the correct interpretation. Herodotus dated the founding of Tyre at 2746 B. C., but until recent discoveries such antiquity was not credited.

Now, however, the tablets found at Ras Shamra on the coast of what was ancient Phœnicia, both directly and indirectly presume an early date.

In the previous chapter about the Shepherd Kings, reference is made to the great Babylonian Semitic conqueror Sargon, whose date B. C. 2752 has been fairly well established.

Sargon has left inscriptions from which we gather that he penetrated to the Mediterranean and conquered North Syria; his successor, Naram Sin, certainly did so. So Herodotus' statement that Tyre was founded in 2746 B. C., may be correct, since the date seems to approximate with the Sargon, or Naram Sin, invasion.

In the passage previously quoted, Herodotus represents the Phœnicians as coming from the

shores of the Erythrean Sea; and whether this means the Red Sea, or the Persian Gulf, the reference contains a suggestion of their original Semitic origin. The Phœnicians do not appear under that name in the Bible, with the exception of Christ's healing of the Syrophœnician woman. But they nevertheless come into the Old Testament under such designations as—"the inhabitants of Tyre," or "of Zidon" or "Arvad."

Bible students will also remember the close relations that King Solomon had with Hiram, king of Tyre, in the building of the Temple at Jerusalem. At the conclusion of the last chapter, quotations were made from Genesis 9, concerning the Canaanites, and it may be noticed that their northern border extended to the Phœnician city of Zidon. But it is suggested that, as in Palestine, these Canaanites were fellahin, and were only responsible for any civilization that existed before the occupation of their country by Semites.

Syria was the country behind the Phœnician coastlands. A later chapter will discuss the subject of whether Abraham sojourned in Syria before he came into Palestine. Anyhow, we read: "And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban, the Syrian, to be his wife" (Gen. 25: 20). Now, as Bible readers know, Laban's two daughters, Leah and Rachel, in turn married Isaac's son Jacob. The connection of

Syria with the Israelites seems strong in the light of such a passage as the following: "Thou shalt speak and say before the Lord, thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father [Jacob], and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there" (Deut. 26: 5).

Since the Syrians belonged to the Semitic race, there seems little doubt left that the Phœnicians were the same, though possibly mingled with other elements. Indeed one is inclined from the Ras Shamra discoveries to regard them as a mixed population of many nationalities.

The Ras Shamra inscriptions were found in what was once northern Phœnicia; so there has been a natural tendency to assume these writings were Phœnician. It is too soon yet to assert that this association is incorrect. But one or more of the tablets deciphered represent those who used the rituals inscribed upon them as being Arabs from the Arabah, or extreme south of Palestine.

That seems to satisfy a tradition that the Phœnicians were a people who fled from the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, in consequence of the cataclysm that occurred in Abraham's time, associated with the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

In a later chapter it will be seen that the Ras Shamra tablets contain much with which we are familiar through the earlier books in the Bible, but mixed up with it is the gross polytheism and mythology already associated in our minds with

Phoenicia, and familiar to us through Greek sources.

These Ras Shamra inscriptions of 1400–1350 B. C. incidentally confirm the authenticity of the writings of the Phœnician sage, Sanchuniathon.

Critics have regarded Sanchuniathon's writings as a forgery on the part of the Greek writer Philo Byblus; the Ras Shamra discovery suggests them to be genuine.

The date of Sanchuniathon is variously placed from before the siege of Troy (1197 B. C.) to about 900. He claimed to have had access to inscriptions of a much earlier date. Indeed his account leads one to believe that he had searched out history written by Thoth, the Egyptian god of writing. He mentions Adam and Eve under the names Aion and Hawwa, and alludes indirectly to the Temptation. Here it should be recorded that a Ras Shamra tablet also mentions Adam; it describes him as "the Man from the East," but it does not, as was originally reported, mention Eve.

Sanchuniathon's statements, in the light of Ras Shamra, become of new importance for the study of Greek mythology. They convey the impression that the gods and demi-gods, familiar to us in the Classics, mostly came from Asia Minor.

It is the author's opinion that this location for the home of classical mythology is a correct one; and further, that in some cases at least, the Greek and Roman deities and demi-gods once lived on

the earth as human beings, and were afterwards deified. The curious passage about the offspring of the intercourse between the sons of God and daughters of men (Gen. 6: 4) seems to support such a conjecture.

But to revert to Sanchuniathon. He describes the Creation, and the ten generations of men following it, in terms which bear resemblances to both the Biblical and Babylonian accounts. Though nothing seems to be said about the Flood in these polytheistic records, there appears to be a break at the tenth generation, which suggests correspondence with the ten generations before the Flood recorded in the earlier chapters of Genesis; as well as with the ten generations recorded on the Babylonian cuneiform clay prism illustrated in this book.

In Sanchuniathon's writings there follows the statement: "Generation 21. From these men were begot Misor and Sydyc, *i. e.*, well freed and just. These found out the use of salt." Dr. Langdon has pointed out that the word "Misor" should be Mishor—"Righteousness" and that the mistake is evidence that the writer was dealing with Babylonian names. In Babylonian mythology these two are attendants of the god—Shamash. It has been suggested that the passage, "Righteousness and justice are the habitation of thy throne," found in Psalm 89: 14, may be related to this imagery.

Dr. Langdon says that among the Syrians, Phœ-



nicians and Canaanites, "El" seems to have become a special name for Shamash.

But to continue: "Generation 22. From Misor came Tautus who found out the writing of the first letters, whom the Egyptians call Thoor, the Alexandrians Thoyth, and the Greeks Hermes. But from Sydyc came the Dioscuri, or Cabiri, or Corybantes, or Samothraces. These he saith first invented the building a complete ship."

Thus the Cabiri appear to have been Semites. There are allusions to them in the Ras Shamra tablets, and they seem to have been demi-gods with an eighth brother Æsculapius.

Meanwhile it is interesting to notice that Breasted, the Egyptian historian, identifies Æsculapius with a certain Imhotep who lived in Egypt in the thirtieth century B. C., a time which according to present calculations is comparatively near to the Flood. In the Ras Shamra inscriptions this man's name appears as Eshmun.

The evidence of early intercourse with Egypt in ancient Phœnician writings is fully borne out by other archæological discoveries; and it is only what one would expect to be the case. The Phœnician seaports were but three or four days sail from Old Gaza, on the Egyptian frontier, where Sir Flinders Petrie has found these five ancient cities superimposed one above each other. Sir Flinders claims that certain gold ornaments which he has dug up there in the strata dated 1500 B. C. are of Irish

manufacture. It has also been asserted that certain blue paste beads, found at Stonehenge, and in various parts of Wiltshire, England, came from Egypt about the same early date. Were Phœnician ships the medium whereby this incredibly early trading was carried on with the far-distant shores of England and possibly Ireland? The connection of these two countries with Egypt and with Asia Minor at this remote period of time, when Moses was possibly living at the Egyptian court, receives some confirmation from tradition. But an age which has rejected traditions of a far more recent date, could hardly be expected to take any notice of such stories.

A further problem that arises in connection with the early relations between the Phœnicians and Egypt is the part that they played in the invasion of the Shepherd Kings. As stated in the last chapter, there seems little doubt that the Hyksos were great horsemen, and we can hardly associate horsemanship with the dwellers on the coastland. But nevertheless it must be borne in mind that both the Phœnicians, and the Shepherd Kings, were branches of the same Semitic race, and the affinity between them probably made them allies. And again, there is the evidence of these Ras Shamra tablets that the ancestors of a people living in the north of Phœnicia were Arabs.

Writers have long laid emphasis on Egyptian rule and influence in Phœnicia, but the time has

surely come when we must recognize the converse—Phœnician rule and influence in Egypt. Do the ruins of these great palaces, Sir Flinders Petrie is excavating at Old Gaza, represent the ebb and flow of a Phœnician-Hyksos conquest of Egypt? Apparently this great Egyptian authority is reaching some such conclusions for in his *Ancient Egypt: A Revision of History*, he writes:

“The determinative of three water lines, MU, which accompanies seven names (*i. e.*, on the Hyksos scarabs) would agree to their being seafarers, which is implied in the title of the sixteenth dynasty ‘Hellenic shepherd kings,’ as Hellene is the regular equivalent of maritime ‘HA NEBU,’ ‘lords of the north.’ The fifteenth dynasty is correctly named from Phœnicia, whence it entered Egypt.”

On the whole it would seem as though we must expect to find in Phœnicia a connection with the descendants of Japheth as well as with the Semites. We read in the Bible: “The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and .Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz and Riphath and Togarmah. And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim. Of these were the isles of the nations divided in their lands, every one after his tongue; after their families, in their nations.”

The identity of all these peoples is not clear. Kittim is usually supposed to be Cyprus. But the

general effect of the passage is to suggest that the Greeks are included in this group. The giant Japetos was their mythological ancestor, and his name has been identified with Japheth. The close connections between the seafaring Phœnicians, and the Greeks, has already been suggested.

The Cabiri according to Sanchuniathon are connected with the island of Samothrace. Mr. Theodore Gaster of London, whose work on the Ras Shamra tablets in Paris enables him to speak with authority, informs the writer that these Cabiri are termed Agzarim on these ancient tablets, an Arabic word that means "islanders." They are also called "sons of the sea." Eshmun, whose name has been mentioned as the eighth of these heroes, was specially worshipped in Cyprus, and also in the island of Sardinia. This information about the Cabiri and about Eshmun is of importance to classical scholars, for they will notice that the Ras Shamra tablets settle a long disputed question; but as it is not of much interest to the general public, this brief notice must be sufficient. It is, however, useful since it establishes the very close connection between the Phœnicians, and the inhabitants of the islands of the Mediterranean and their inhabitants, in remote times.

## VII

### EVIDENCE ABOUT ABRAHAM

LET us commence this chapter by reference to Abraham's descent from Shem—the eldest son of Noah. The genealogical record (which may be found in the eleventh chapter of Genesis) runs as follows: Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, Abram (later re-named Abraham). Eber, the fourth in this pedigree, appears to have been a quite important person, for in Genesis 10: 21 we read: "Shem, the father of all the children of Eber." Further on, we are told that this same Eber had two sons—Peleg and Joktan. It should be observed that Abraham's descent came through Peleg, while Joktan was the father of a dozen races, the conglomeration of their names identifying them with South Arabia.

In the two previous chapters reference has been made to two main streams of Semitic migration into Syria and Palestine—the Semitic Babylonian and the Arabian. The suggestion would seem to be that these two streams were the respective descendants of Peleg and Joktan, and grouped together, as a whole, under the general title "the

children of Eber,"—whence the word "Hebrew." If such be the case, then Abraham belonged to the Semitic-Babylonian branch, while the Shepherd Kings probably descended from the Arabian.

In Dr. Langdon's great book *Semitic Mythology*, there occurs a passage of much significance (p. 72) from which the following extract is taken:

"The Hebrew deity El . . . whose name occurs quite regularly in the plural Elohim . . . is the god of the Habiru, a people who appear in various kingdoms and local city dynasties of Babylonia and Assyria from 2200 B. C. . . . I am entering on debatable ground here when I assume that the Hebrews and their god Illani (plural always written ideographically) are identical with the Habiru and their god Elohim. There seems no doubt at all that this was the case. . . . Accepting this thesis, the Hebrews had served for six centuries as mercenary soldiers and traders among the Babylonians, Assyrians, etc. . . . before they entered and occupied Canaan."

The importance of this quotation will be seen later, when we pass from the days of Abraham (2100 B. C.) to the time of Joshua—a period of seven centuries. But here we gain an impression of the original warlike character of the sons of Eber in contrast to the peaceful nature of Abraham and his descendants, until the Israelites were forced to fight in the wilderness for their Promised Land. The passage also reflects light on the other branch

of the sons of Eber, the Arabians who became known as the Shepherd Kings.

So much, then, for Abraham's ancestry. Let us now glance at his immediate relatives and the place where the days of his youth were spent.

In Genesis 11: 27-32, we read: "Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. . . . And Terah took Abram, his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai, his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran and dwelt there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran."

A critical study (for what it is worth), of this quotation, indicates a residence of Terah and his family at Ur of the Chaldees from the birth till the death of his youngest son Haran. Since Haran lived to have a son Lot, the family must have been at Ur of the Chaldees for a considerable time. The passage is, in a way, remarkable, because it does not say that Abram himself was born there, although we infer that he was educated there. The apocryphal books of the Old Testament, such as the Book of Jasher, represent Terah to have been a great soldier. If the writer's memory serves him correctly (these lines being written far away from

his library), Terah is represented in the Book of Jasher as commander of the armies of the king of Babylonia.

Bible critics, who love conjecture and hate tradition, would, of course, treat this with scorn. Nevertheless one of the recently-discovered Ras Shamra tablets is said to refer to a conflict with Hebrews and their god Terach. Terah is obviously derived from Terach, and the latter is said to have been a name for the moon-god. The fact that Ur of the Chaldees was a center of the worship of the moon-god serves to complete the picture.

Our readers will appreciate that this evidence tends to support the reality of Abraham's relationship and his residence at Ur. It may be urged that this identification of Terah with moon-worship is both distasteful to our present-day beliefs, and damages the evidence that monotheism was the original religion of the Semitic race. Nevertheless it confirms what Joshua (ch. 24: 2) long afterwards told the Israelites: "Your fathers dwelt of old beyond the River, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; *and they served other gods.*"

Let us now turn to what we have learned quite recently about this place Ur of the Chaldees. It is a matter of common knowledge that Dr. Woolley has been excavating there for eight years, and his discovery of the deposits left by the Flood have been already referred to in these pages. Those



who have read the reports of his excavations will recall his discoveries, very deep down in the soil, of the royal interments of the ancient kings of Ur; and of the evidence around the royal corpses of the wholesale massacre of soldiers, slaves, and maids of honor, in order that these might all become attendants of the deceased in the next world. Some evidence surely, however barbaric, of a belief in a future life! Dr. Woolley's excavation of the interior of the city of Ur of the Chaldees, and his discoveries there, change previous conceptions of the surroundings in which Abram must have spent his earlier years. Dr. Woolley tells us that in the great patriarch's day, the citizens of Ur lived in houses built of walls of burnt brick below, with mud brick above, the whole being both plastered and white-washed. These houses were two stories high, and contained as many as a dozen and more rooms grouped round a central paved courtyard.

The streets of the city were very narrow, and the walls on either side lacked windows, for the houses derived their light and air from the interior courtyards. The inside of these dwelling-houses reminds us of our own modern residences. There was the staircase to the upper floor made of brick, it is true, rather than wood; and there was the lavatory behind the staircase. There was the kitchen with its fireplace, the reception-room with its wider doors, the servants' hall and the family chapel for worship. Against the rear wall of the

latter was a brick altar, with a shallow niche above, or at the side, for clay images, or Teraphim, which may perhaps be compared with the Lares and Penates of the Romans. Under the floor of the chapel was a vaulted tomb where members of the family were buried.

The education possessed by the inhabitants of these houses was demonstrated by the occasional finds inside them of cuneiform clay tablets: some were historical, others were hymn-books, others dealt with mathematics, or arithmetic. Among the latter there were even forms for extracting both square and cube roots. It comes as a shock to us that besides being able to read and write, both Abram, and even Sarah, in their younger days might have suffered the same perplexities regarding cube-roots as do our present-day students!

The suggestion that Abram discontinued his studies in cities and went West to keep sheep, may serve as an example. The name Abraham, or rather Abram, is found in the Babylonian cuneiform contract tablets of about his era; it means "My father is high." A similar designation also occurs in South Arabia.

Our readers have already been promised further information as to the date that Abraham lived, and this seems a suitable place for it, although the chronology is derived from the Jericho excavations, which come later. It was somewhat of a surprise to the author of this work, after he had written his

English edition, to discover that the Jericho dating fitted the Bible narrative, before the Fall of Jericho, as well as afterwards.

Let us set down these calculations as simply as possible:

Abraham was one hundred years old when Isaac was born . . . . .	100
Genesis 21: 5	
Isaac was sixty years old when Jacob was born . . . . .	60
Genesis 25: 26	
Jacob was one hundred and thirty years old when he went down into Egypt . . . . .	130
Genesis 47: 9	
The Israelites were in Egypt four hundred and thirty years . . . . .	430
Exodus 12: 40, 41	
The Israelites wandered forty years in the Wilderness . . . . .	40
Deut. 2: 7, etc., Joshua 5: 6	
Jericho was destroyed by Joshua (according to Professor Gar- stang's excavations) about . . . . .	1400 B. c.
Abraham born . . . . .	<u>2160 B. c.</u>
From the above we calculate that as Abraham came into Canaan when seventy-five years old (Gen. 12: 4) that event occurred . . . . .	2085 B. c.
And that as he was one hundred years old when Isaac was born, the latter was born . . . . .	2060 B. c.

Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed when Abraham was ninety-nine, *i. e.*, in ..... 2061 B. c.  
Genesis 17: 1

Abraham was one hundred and seventy-five when he died. .... 1985 B. c.  
Genesis 25: 7

The great Semitic monarch, Hammurabi, has been identified with Amraphel king of Shinar mentioned in Genesis 14: 1 as a contemporary of Abraham. The date of Hammurabi has now been ascertained through what is known as the Venus tablet of Ammizaduga, that is to say by astronomy. This cuneiform tablet recorded the heliacal rising and setting of the planet Venus taken in the reign of a certain king of Babylonia named Ammizaduga. With this record before him, an astronomer recently fixed the accession of this monarch at 1777 B. c. Another astronomer however worked out the calculations at 1921 B. c.

Babylonian history appeared to place Hammurabi's accession as one hundred forty-six years earlier than that of Ammizaduga, and to indicate that he reigned for forty-three years. This on the original calculation gave a date 2123-2080 B. c. But the later discovery of the clay prism illustrated in this book, has caused further modifications of the interval between the two kings.

So Dr. Langdon now suggests Hammurabi's reign to have been 2067-2024 B. c. Either interval of

dates fits into the life of Abraham. And it is most significant, that astronomical work on this remote period, confirms the Jericho and Bible dating as above.

The two periods of dates for Hammurabi, also fit a date for Chedorlaomer's raid, though the first would place it at the end of his reign, the other at the beginning. Probably the latter is nearer the correct one. A further reference to this subject occurs later. Meanwhile, let us pass on to the sojourn of Terah and his family in Haran.

There is a problem concerning the location of Haran. The place with which it is usually identified is Harran, far north in Assyria; and it is contended that Terah, Nahor, and Serug occur there as place names. But as we have already seen, the Ras Shamra tablets refer to the moon-god Terach, whence Terah doubtless derived his name. Now this Harran, like Ur of the Chaldees, was a very renowned seat of the moon-worship. The moon-god was named Sin, and in much later times this city had a week of seven days, which has been traced to Babylonian origin. Conditions therefore seem to satisfy this identification with Terah and Abraham.

On the other hand, it has been contended that the real Haran, to which Terah took his family, was near Damascus, and was named after the son Haran who had died in Ur of the Chaldees. A place about fourteen miles from Damascus has

been suggested, and even the Hauran, a district marked in our map to the north of the Sea of Galilee. If the ultimate destination of Terah's party was Canaan, there was no need whatever for him to migrate as far north as the more famous Haran. The association of Abraham with Damascus is referred to by Josephus in his *Antiquities* I, 7, 2, written A. D. 93:

"And Nicolaus of Damascus in the fourth book of his history says thus—'Abram reigned at Damascus; being a foreigner who came with an army out of the land above Babylon called the land of the Chaldeans; but after a long time he got him up, and removed from that country also, with his people, and went into the land then called the land of Canaan. . . . Now the name of Abram is even still famous in the country of Damascus; and there is showed a village called from him the Habitation of Abram.'"

The Nicolaus here quoted was a well-known historian who wrote about a century earlier than Josephus.

The situation of Haran further arises in connection with Jacob's flight from Laban (Gen. 31). The patriarch travelling with his wives, his children and his cattle, could not possibly have covered three hundred and fifty miles in ten days. Yet that is the approximate distance from the northern Haran to Mount Gilead where Laban overtook his son-in-law. On the other hand, the

distance from a Damascus Haran would only be about eighty-four miles, which fits the narrative.

The question raises far-reaching issues, involving the situation of Aram Naharaim (Aram of the two rivers) and Padan-Aram (the Plain of Aram). It has been pointed out that the literal rendering of Isaiah 7: 8 is: "The head of Aram is Damascus," and the two rivers, usually identified with the Euphrates and its tributary, may be the Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus. If this should prove to be correct, other changes as revolutionary as those required by recent archaeological discoveries must be made in commentaries of the Old Testament.

On consideration it would seem probable, that the original destination of Terah and his family was Harran in northern Mesopotamia, but that, later, they moved south near to Damascus, and named their new settlement Haran. Further on, when Abraham was in southern Palestine, he sent his servant to his kindred in the north to obtain a wife for his son Isaac. The narrative reads as follows: "The servant arose and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor." Now the original of the word translated "Mesopotamia" in our Bible is "Aram Naharaim," and the identity assumed creates confusion. The phrase "the city of Nahor" suggests a smaller place than the celebrated Harran in the north.

Another piece of evidence for the ultimate loca-

tion of Abraham's relatives near Damascus in Syria, is supplied by the name of Nahor's son—Laban. The two great ranges or ridges of hills in the interior of Syria are called Lebanon and Ante-Lebanon; and M. Dussaud, a distinguished French scholar, has drawn attention to the connection between the names Laban and Lebanon. The near relation of the Phœnicians to the Syrians and Hebrews has been already emphasized, and the interior of Syria, otherwise Aram, near Damascus, might well have seen a sojourn of Abraham, the Hebrew, and of Jacob, the Aramean. The Bible description of Abraham's departure into Canaan (Gen. 12: 1-9) contains some significant passages which justify its reproduction here. It runs as follows:

“Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to



go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto the mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south."

The call of Abraham described in the above verses, rings down all through the ages. It must have influenced the Pilgrim Fathers and the early settlers in this land.

We have evidence that Abraham's father, Terah, worshipped the moon-god, and we naturally wonder at what period in his life Abraham abandoned that type of worship. The Book of Jasher (to which reference has already been made) represents the patriarch as having done so while still at Ur of the Chaldees. But that would hardly account for the family leaving one center of moon-worship, for another center of moon-worship.

Nevertheless Stephen in his speech to the Jewish Sanhedrin, before his martyrdom (Acts 7: 2), says: "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran."

The phenomena associated with manifestations and messages from the Unseen, such as recorded here in Abraham's case, are only just beginning to be recognized by scientists. Avoiding the problem of spiritism, in England there are some great names associated with this work—the late Lord Balfour, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and others. Yet the tide of doubt still sets strong, swelled by the perversity of those who regard radio as the only source whence messages reach us.

The towns mentioned in the long reference quoted above from Genesis 12 are Shechem, Bethel and Ai. The archæological research of recent years has led Dr. Albright to write in *The Archæology of Palestine and the Bible* (p. 133):

“Practically every town mentioned in the narratives of the Patriarchs was in existence in the Middle Bronze Age (2000–1600 B. C.). Examples are Shechem, Bethel, Ai, Jerusalem (Salem), Gerar, Dothan, Beersheba.”

A reference back to the chronology of Abraham as set out in the earlier part of this chapter, indicates that he entered Canaan about 2085 B. C., a date sufficiently near to the commencement of the Middle Bronze Age to justify the assumption that the towns mentioned in our quotation from Genesis 12, namely, Shechem, Bethel, and Ai, were then in existence.

The next incident in Abraham's life, on which

recent exploration furnishes evidence, is recorded in Genesis 13: 8-13, as follows:

“And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.”

Those who have visited the Holy Land can readily picture Abraham and Lot, standing on the great plateau of hills which tower above this plain of Jordan on the western side, and looking down several thousand feet into the deep depression of what is now the Dead Sea. Our chapter on geography has already referred to the fact that this Plain of Jordan lies far below sea-level. Reference has also been made to Dr. Albright's discovery,

that this was once a very fertile district. To quote his actual words:

"The results of this and numerous other expeditions made by the writer into the Jordan Valley, have definitely established the correctness of the very early Bible tradition that the valley was very prosperous and densely populated when Abraham came into the country."

And again even more emphatically:

"These researches, and those of Pere Mallon and other scholars have proved that the most prosperous period of the history of this valley was in the Early Bronze Age (2500-2000 B. C.)."

To this may now be added the recent testimony of Professor Garstang regarding the earlier cities of ancient Jericho, to which reference has already been made. As will be seen from a glance at the map, Jericho stood at the northern end of what is now the Dead Sea; the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were at the other end.

We now reach an incident in Lot's sojourn in these Cities of the Plain of great historical interest. It must have occurred soon after he had parted from Abraham. The passage in Genesis (14: 1-12) describing it, runs as follows:

"And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlao-

mer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations, that these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela which is Zoar. All these joined together in the vale of Siddim which is the salt sea. Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness. And they returned, and came to Enmishpat which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazazon-tamar. And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar); and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; . . . And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and they fell there, and they that remained fled to the mountain. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed."

It will be observed that this incident is dated "In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar," and as already indicated the author identifies Amraphel with Hammurabi, the great Semitic legislator, whose code of laws, engraven on stone, was found

some thirty years ago. In doing this the author has regretfully to differ from Dr. Albright who declines to accept the identification, and places Abraham two centuries later. On the other hand, there is the great authority of Dr. Langdon who writes in *Semitic Mythology* (p. 384): "In my opinion Hammurabi, Ammarabi, etc. is Amraphel king of Kingin (Kingir, Singir, Heb. Shinegar, Shinar," Gen. 14: 9), etc. And the identification has been accepted by other recent English authorities.

The chronology of Abraham as set down earlier in this chapter, being based on the Jericho-excavation date, seems to further establish this identification.

As will have been noticed there is still an element of uncertainty about the precise astronomical date of king Ammizaduga, and about the precise number of years between Hammurabi and him. But both periods come into the lifetime of Abraham. Allowing for some margins in this remote period of time, the evidence is quite conclusive. On the vexed question of the names of the other kings involved, there is no need to trouble our readers. But attention is drawn to the fact that Chedorlao-mer, the leader of the expedition, was king of Elam. Our readers are reminded that the culture of Elam is associated by Sir Flinders Petrie in his excavations at Old Gaza.

\* The road by which the five kings invaded

southern Palestine was the route on the east of the Jordan referred to in the chapter on Geography. In *The Archæology of Palestine and the Bible* (pp. 142-3) Dr. Albright has some interesting notes on the places mentioned in the passage quoted above thus:

*Ashteroth Karnaim*—"Formerly the writer considered this extraordinary line of march as being the best proof of the essentially legendary character of the narrative. In 1929, however, he discovered a line of Early and Middle Bronze age mounds, some of great size, running down along the eastern edge of Gilead, between the desert and the forests of Gilead. Moreover the cities of Hauran (Bashan) with which the account of the campaign opens, Ashtarothe and Karnaim were both occupied in this period, as shown by archæological examination of their sites."

*Ham*—"In 1929 Professor Jirku of Breslau and the writer undertook to investigate the antiquities of Ham, and immediately discovered the presence there of a small but very ancient mound, going back to the Bronze Age."

*Mount Seir*—"Some inkling of the reason which led the Eastern army down into the region of Seir, far south of the Dead Sea, may perhaps be obtained from the fact that there were extensive and important deposits of copper, manganese (used for kuhl) and other minerals in Seir and Midian."

This is all good evidence that the route taken by the four kings from the East accords with recent

discoveries, since the dates assigned for Ashteroth and Karnaim—Early and Middle Bronze 2500–1600 B. C.—cover the period of Abraham.

But to continue the story, as quoted from the Bible. The battle with the five kings of the cities of the plain took place in the valley of Siddim, which is the Salt Sea, and which was full of slime parts. It is dangerous to speculate on the extent of the Dead Sea, obviously here referred to as "the Salt Sea," prior to the cataclysm which overwhelmed Sodom and Gomorrah. But the writer has very definite recollection of the series of salt sand mounds which lie between the north end of the Dead Sea and Jericho. Professor Garstang has found ample evidence that Jericho had been a store city of the Hyksos. During the twelve years that Sodom and Gomorrah served Chedorlaomer, their tribute might well have been sent and stored there, and the battle in the Plain of Siddim might indeed have been fought outside its walls.

However that may have been, the defeat of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah led to the capture of Abraham's nephew Lot. When the patriarch heard of it, "he led forth his trained servants born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan" (Gen. 14: 14).

In due course Abraham routs the army of the four Eastern kings by a surprise attack at night, somewhere by Dan, in the north near the Sea of Galilee, and pursued them towards Damascus.



The passage quoted is interesting, because Professor Yahuda has pointed out that the word translated "trained servants" is *hanakim*, an Egyptian word of about 2000 B. C. used for the retainers of Palestine chieftains.

On his way back, at a place called Shaveh (the king's vale), which may have been immediately below the ancient Jebusite city of Jerusalem, Abraham met an important and mysterious personage—Melchizedek, king of Salem. In the years 1924–7 the author was associated with the Palestine Exploration Fund's excavations on the hill of Ophel, Jerusalem. The site is beyond the southeastern end of the present wall. It was then a great place for growing cauliflowers. The Fund had to compensate one grower to the extent of something like \$1,450, for the loss of prospective cauliflowers on his patch! Beneath this "fertile" soil, were found the remains of the ancient Jebusite city of Jerusalem over which Melchizedek once ruled. In his days it was a small place of only about seven acres, surrounded by a wall twenty-four feet thick. It stood on the top of the ridge where the Kedron and the Tyropean valleys meet. To-day the Tyropean is nearly filled up with débris, and it is hard to realize what a stronghold Jebusite Jerusalem must have been.

Down underneath in the Kedron valley is the celebrated Virgin's Fountain, whence the villagers of Silwan or Siloam still draw their water. The

well is fed by an intermittent spring which discharges its water thrice a day, apparently through a natural syphon in the rock. From the top of the ridge where once stood the interior of the city, there descends a subterranean passage, by which direct access to this Fountain was obtained by those inside the walls. But the water was also carried by a narrow covered-in passage hewn in the solid rock along the side of the hill below the city, to the junction of the two valleys, and there used to irrigate the king's garden. It was probably here that Abraham and Melchizedek met, in beautiful surroundings, with the grim wall of the Jebusite Jerusalem towering above in the background.

Let us now return to the Bible story contained in Genesis 14: 18-20: "And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God," etc. The Hebrew words here translated "most high God" are "El Elyon." This is a very ancient title for the Deity. Sanchuniathon, the Phœnician sage, already quoted, says that Elioun was the principal deity of Gebal (Byblus), and that he was called Hypsistos—which is Greek for "Most High." An early inscription is also reported from elsewhere in which the name appears as "Elyan." The Semites, as we shall see later, associated their worship of the Deity with the tops of hills or mountains. So Jerusalem was peculiarly fitted for the worship of God Most High. But who was Mel-

chizedek? Whole volumes have been written about him. There is an allusion to him in Psalm 110; and in Hebrews 7: 1-3 we read:

“For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.”

In considering problems of religion that arise in connection with the Ras Shamra inscriptions, it would seem as though this writer of this Epistle to the Hebrews must have had especial knowledge of Semitic religion before Moses. It is also remarkable that the formula “without father, without mother” etc., actually occurs on three of the Tel el Amarna tablets written seven centuries later by the then King of Jerusalem to the reigning Pharaoh.

The word Zedek was also a name identified with Jerusalem, for its king, whom Joshua fought in those Tel el Amarna times, was called Adoni-Zedek (Josh. 10: 1). The word Adoni = Lord and Melchi = King.

Reference has been made to one Sydyk in the quotations of Sanchuniathon's writing. It is sug-

gested that Sydyc is the origin of Zedek. It is probable that Melchizedek was a priest of the original monotheism, a survivor of the Shepherd Kings' aristocracy. The name is said to have been found in South Arabian inscriptions. But the passage quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews suggests an even higher origin.

Let us next notice the narrative of Genesis 16, in which Abraham's wife Sarah, in consequence of the fact that she bore him no children, gave him her maid Hagar, the Egyptian, as a kind of second wife. This procedure was in accordance with the legal code of Hammurabi (or Amraphel), to which reference has already been made. It is there laid down that the wife might give the husband a slave girl as a concubine to bear him children, but he must not then take one himself! Later on the same procedure was adopted by both the wives of Jacob. These incidents supply further illustrations of the genuineness of these stories in the light of archæological discoveries. Hagar's son was named Ishmael and became the father of twelve nations. The eldest Nebaioth became the founder of the Nabatheans, a race which seems to have figured prominently in ancient history, and with whom the marvelous rock city of Petra has been associated. Some interesting excavations were made there a few years ago. And the spot is visited by parties of tourists each year from Amman (Philadelphia) in Transjordan, whence it

lies about one hundred and twenty miles south in the direction of the Gulf of Akaba, the eastern arm of the Red Sea.

The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah now again come into the narrative. According to the chronology set down in the earlier part of this chapter, an interval of perhaps ten years elapsed after they had been plundered by Chedorlaomer. In the meantime the morals of their inhabitants had further deteriorated, and their punishment came in the form of a cataclysm, which converted what had formerly been one of the fairest spots in the country, into a desolation of salt. A controversy has raged as to whether these cities lay at the north, or south end, of what is now the Dead Sea. This seems to have been settled in favor of the latter by the recent discoveries of Dr. Albright, to whom we are again indebted for the following information. At a site called Bab el Dra, situated on the hills at the south end of the Dead Sea, Dr. Albright discovered the remains of a large fortress. He there found vast quantities of potsherd dating between 2600 B. C. and 1900 B. C. at latest. The site was unsuitable for cultivation, but had been used apparently for religious festivals by the neighboring peoples. Near here he obtained evidence to locate Zoar, one of five Cities of the Plain; and reached the conclusion that all had been submerged by the waters of the Dead Sea which in course of ages have risen considerably above their old level.

Five streams of fresh water that still flow into the southeast end of the Sea, form five modern oases, and it was below these on the older level of the Sea, that Dr. Albright locates the five cities.

Now although Dr. Albright goes on to express his opinion that the date of Abraham cannot be placed earlier than the nineteenth century B. c., yet the evidence of the occupation of Bab el Dra from 2500 B. c. seems certainly to admit the possibility that the cataclysm recorded in Genesis 19 occurred in B. c. 2061. Bab el Dra appears to have been used as a kind of High Place for religious observances; and that would account for pottery fragments of a later date than B. c. 2061 being found there. It seems unlikely that all religious worship in that district of necessity ceased, after the terrible visitation that befell the cities; one might indeed presume that the contrary would be the case.

The next incident in the life of Abraham concerns his sojourn at Gerar in South Palestine on which recent research has thrown some light. It is recorded in Genesis 20. But here it is necessary to point out that a precisely similar story is told of Abraham's son Isaac, in Genesis 26. If the Abraham story is in its proper place in the narrative, Sarah was an old woman when the incident happened, and it would almost seem as though there was a duplication of the narrative with that of Isaac and Rebekah. However this may

be, Sir Flinders Petrie's excavations at Gerar, in 1927, afford evidence in favor of one, or both stories. The narratives represent both Abraham and Isaac passing off their respective wives as their sisters, to Abimelech king of Gerar.

The Isaac story describes Abimelech as king of the Philistines, and the critics have pounced upon the narrative on the ground that the Philistines had not come into Palestine at this early period of history. Petrie, however, found that the district round Gerar had been a great wheat growing center. The Philistines, or at least some of them, are said to have come from the island of Crete.

As our readers are doubtless aware, excavations in recent years at Knossos, and other places in this island, have revealed the splendid civilization of Minos which goes back to these early times. Now the island of Crete was not a wheat growing district; hence the presence of Cretan, or Philistine, representatives, in the wheat growing country, behind the ancient seaport of Old Gaza, from whence the grain would be shipped to the island.

Another quite interesting confirmation of the Isaac story was noticed by Petrie when he excavated the palace, on the great Tell or mound of Gerar. Standing on the summit he observed that he could see directly into the tents on the Bedouin camping ground below the mound. In consequence of the fact that the wind nearly always blows in one direction in this district, the openings of these

tents always face the palace; and doubtless have always done so. The story narrated about Isaac (Gen. 26: 8, 9), after he had told Abimelech king of the Philistines, that Rebekah was his sister, runs as follows:

“And it came to pass when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and behold Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife, and Abimelech called Isaac and said, Behold of a surety she is thy wife.”

Writing of Abraham's sojourn at Gerar has brought about a reference to Old Gaza, the seaport whence the wheat was shipped to Crete. Abraham must have known all about this city for at Gerar he was only some fifteen miles away. It is still being excavated by Sir Flinders Petrie, for the area of its ruins is twenty times larger than Jericho whose excavation is dealt with in later chapters.

Old Gaza appears to have been the great seaport town of South Palestine many centuries before Abraham. Except for an allusion to the fact that the border of the ancient Canaanites extended from Zidon in the north, to Gaza in the south, the early narrative of the Old Testament is silent regarding it. It is less than a year since the author motored down from Jerusalem to Gaza to visit these excavations. The route lay through Hebron, which appeared to be a good size flourishing town.



Then the road deteriorated, and the hard surface of the adjoining desert seemed to have been preferred by motorists. There was a fair amount of grass, and one could picture Abraham's vast flocks in this big, open space. In the center of Beersheba, a real country town, was a great well, said to have been the one dug by Abraham. And then into the desert again, now scarred by the remains of a Turkish railway, and many trenches and dugouts, all legacies of the Great War. Then through modern Gaza, and civilization, and on south to Old Gaza (Tel el Ajjul)—fine old mounds on the north bank of a washout, which once must have been a wide river estuary. Why is there no reference to this large city in the sacred narrative? Abraham and his household had become a pastoral people: perhaps Gaza was too much like Ur of the Chaldees.

Whatever the reason, the history and civilization of Old Gaza (Tel el Ajjul) now being brought to light by Sir Flinders Petrie, seems quite as surprising as that of Ur of the Chaldees.

If we have not all visited the ruins of Pompeii in Italy, at least we have seen pictures of them. We remember how the skeletons of streets and houses are disclosed intact, when the volcanic ashes, with which Vesuvius covered them in A. D. 79, are cleared away. Old Gaza appears to have been deserted on account of the eruption of a plague, rather than that of a volcano; but the walls

of its houses still stand eight feet high, the streets and doorways are completely preserved. Thus, one can pass through a city that reached its prime when Abraham lived hard by, but abandoned ere Moses led Israel into the wilderness, or the walls of Jericho fell. The plague that brought on this desolation is thought to have been spread by mosquitoes; and the half dry channel of the river bed was still a breeding ground for quite a colony of these pests during the first season of the Petrie Expedition. Since that time the government has drained the swamp, and the excavators are saved this discomfort.

The houses of Old Gaza were three stories high; the ground-floor rooms had large square hearths for fires, stone jars stood in the corners, and the floors were stuccoed. At the entrance of each house was a raised bench embedded with sea-shells, and a drain was made to carry off the water of ablutions.

The remains of a series of four or five palaces that have been superimposed upon each other have been excavated in this city. Even the earliest of these, which may date back as far as 3000 B. C., has a large bathroom 12 feet by 8 feet. The next palace above this first one had been built of yellow bricks, so well made that subsequent builders used them again. This, too, had a large bathroom and lavatory, white plastered, with underground stone drain. The third palace was built of

mingled yellow and grey-black bricks in the time of Egypt's fifteenth dynasty (2371-2111 B. C.). A fourth palace, erected above all these, is ascribed by Sir Flinders to the sixteenth dynasty (2111-1593 B. C.): while finally, and above the four previous buildings, are the remains of the palace that played its part in the stormy times of the eighteenth dynasty of Egypt (1573 B. C. onwards), when the Shepherd Kings were finally expelled, and the Egyptians in turn attacked Palestine. All this vast civilization appears to have come first from the Semitic Babylonians, and later from the Shepherd Kings. And all the while the sailors from Phœnicia were filling up the intervals by trade or by war. Such was the value of their sea power even in these remote times.

Old Gaza was defended by a great sloping wall, or glacis, with a ditch, the mark of its Hyksos occupation. Two subterranean passages, each 500 feet long, one above the other, and leading out of the city, have also been found. They were very old, and seem to have belonged to the earlier cities, perhaps even the very first. What was their purpose? They were perhaps for purposes of surprise attack, or even for escape. If the author's memory is correct, they were each about five feet wide. The horse seems to have been used in sacrifices at Old Gaza, and the finds being made suggest that its inhabitants had such an abundance of gold ornaments that they were rather

careless, and used to lose them in the mud of the streets, or else have them stolen. Reference has already been made to the Irish gold ornaments of 1500 B. C., but the find is so sensational that the mention of it bears repetition. There are also many highly finished fragments of pottery of quite unknown types. This was to be expected at a Mediterranean seaport town of such importance and magnitude.

The birth of Isaac is associated with the long stay of Abraham at Beersheba; the memories of his residence there still seem to cling around that district. One does not feel that excavations are needed to find contemporary evidence of his sojourn in those parts.

There follows the strange chapter in Genesis (Chap. 22) recording the attempted sacrifice of Isaac which opens with the words:

“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”

The land of Moriah suggests Mount Moriah where afterwards the Temple stood. Those who raise the objection that the Temple and its surroundings formed a part of Jerusalem, need to

recollect that even in King David's time, one thousand years later, the site was a threshing-floor, and our readers are asked to recall our brief description of Melchizedek's Jebusite city on the Hill of Ophel at the southeast end of the ridge some little distance from the summit. All that was then Jerusalem was enclosed on this isolated spot. The site of the intended sacrifice might even have been on the higher ridge on the other side of the Tyropean Valley, which was later the upper city, where now stands the former Turkish citadel and the Damascus Gate. We ponder over the meaning of this incident which is explained in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the explanation may be used later to account for certain other incidents not mentioned in the Bible. There follows the death of Sarah, and the purchase of a burying place for her—the Cave of Machpelah, beyond Hebron. The transaction by which Abraham became possessed of this cave, as a burying place for him and for his descendants forever, is recorded in Genesis 23. It is stated both there, and again in Genesis 25, when his own burial is referred to, that he purchased it from Ephron the Hittite, and the price he paid was "four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant" (Gen. 23: 16). This was probably money in the form of ingots, and not coined money. Previously we read that Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold (Gen. 13: 2). The presence of Hittites in

South Palestine at this earlier period has already been referred to in a previous chapter. The Cave of Machpelah remains to this day, as one of the more sacred of the Mahometan shrines. For Abraham is as great a man in the Moslem, as in the Christian, or Jewish faiths.

The writer of these pages, when a lad, delighted in Dean Stanley's account of his visit to this ancient shrine, with the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales. As an immense privilege the heir apparent to the British throne was shown the splendid Mosque above the cave. In the cave itself, according to the Bible narrative, there rest the remains of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with their wives, except Rachel. Jacob's body at any rate was embalmed in Egypt (Gen. 50: 2 and 3), and his mummy might yet be intact in Machpelah. There was also a tradition that the body of Joseph was taken there at a later period.

So matters remained until the Great War, and then in November, 1917, in the course of Lord Allenby's advance on Jerusalem, Hebron was hurriedly evacuated by the Turks. A colonel attached to one of the Guards Regiments was sent to take charge of the place as political officer. On arrival in the town he seems to have been assured that the chief officials had fled to the Mosque of Machpelah for refuge, and thither he followed them. He found all the doors of the sanctuary open, and wandered into its splendid interior. The

British Colonel did not pursue his way into the labyrinth of annexes which are connected with the Mosque, but retraced his steps. He stopped some moments to admire the splendid work on the cenotaphs said to be above the Tombs, and even entered the Shrine of Abraham. There in one of its surrounding panels was a door half open, which had concealed an aperture in the limestone rock about four feet high. Passing through the Colonel slid down a steep incline, and found himself in a cave some twenty feet square. In this interior was a great block of limestone about six feet long, three feet wide, and three feet high, with four small outstanding pillars, one at each corner. It is said that the officer did not realize he had penetrated to a spot of such peculiar sanctity and interest, and in due course retraced his steps. When things became normal an examination of the Mosque was made by experts, but the guardians refused to allow anyone to again enter the cave below it. So matters are to-day; and whether the bodies of the patriarchs are still there still remains an open question.

Dean Stanley's account of the Mosque concludes (if the writer's memory be correct) with the following verses:

*"What though the Patriarchs' Tombs be in the Valley,  
Though heathen hands have sealed the sacred caves,  
And the Red Prophet's children cry 'El Allee' [Allah]  
Over the Hebrews' graves!"*

*Yet a day cometh when these white walls shaking,  
Shall bring again to life the living dead,  
And Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, reawakening,  
Spring from their rocky bed."*

So we leave Abraham, and his immediate descendants. It is perhaps worth while to notice that Jacob el and Joseph el occur as place names in a long inscription of Thotmes III among one hundred and nineteen places in Palestine which he claims to have captured about B. C. 1470. According to the chronology in this chapter Jacob should have been alive about four centuries earlier, and Joseph survived him to perhaps about B. C. 1800.

The charming stories of Joseph and his brethren, which are some of the best that have ever been written (Gen., chapters 41 to 45), contain such an intimate knowledge of Egyptian life of this period, as illustrated for us on Egyptian monuments, that it is impossible to believe they were not committed to writing until some twelve hundred years afterwards.

To sum up then this chapter—It is evident that the background supplied by recent excavations for the period of Abraham, corroborates the sacred narrative. And further that the Bible dating seems to be as correct as is the Bible geography. In the stories themselves confirmations occur even in detail; which are evidence that the narrative was written down at a very early date, when the memory of the events was still quite fresh.



## VIII

### THE EVIDENCE ABOUT JERICHO

**I**N previous chapters of this book, there have been made some important references to the Jericho excavations. It has become advisable to at once give an account of them, and to cite the evidence they supply. But readers are reminded that in taking this course, we are for the time being passing over a period of nearly six centuries which elapsed between the death of Abraham, and the day when his descendants, under the leadership of Joshua, made their successful assault upon the walls of Jericho. During the latter part of that time, the Bible records many incidents in the life of Moses. In a later chapter we shall revert to these stories; but the significance attached to them depends upon the Jericho evidence, so it is expedient to set it down without delay.

Jericho, as will be seen on reference to the map, is just north of the Dead Sea, deep down below ordinary sea level in the Jordan Valley.

There may be those who will remember that, a year or two before the War, the Germans made extensive excavations at Jericho. It is a testimony to the skill of Professor Garstang that he has been

able to disentangle from parts that were left undisturbed, the correct history of the city. The German work at Jericho was very thorough and systematic, but it was carried out before the study of ancient pottery had reached a stage when it could be used for chronological purposes; and consequently the interpretation of what was found lacked the knowledge modern excavators have to guide them. The idea of reopening the excavation of the site of ancient Jericho arose in quite a round-about sort of way.

Professor Garstang had some time earlier, in one of his journeyings through Palestine, discovered the ruins of the city of Hazor, far up in the north, about ten miles beyond the Lake of Galilee, in the direction of what are now known as the Waters of Merom. So when the author joined forces, it was decided that the Professor should make a preliminary expedition to Hazor.

The site is a place now called El Kedah, and is one of the largest in Palestine, being about twelve hundred yards long and six hundred yards wide. It proved to be surrounded by great sloping ramparts of beaten earth, evidence of Hyksos occupation. On the south side the enclosure was dominated by the mound of a city rising one hundred and sixty-five feet above the neighboring road.

So here was a good-sized city which Professor Garstang estimated might have contained a popu-

lation of four thousand people, while the camp enclosure was large enough to accommodate thirty thousand men with a corresponding number of horses and chariots. Hazor thus appears to have been a typical example of the Shepherd Kings' system of offence and defence. Excavations revealed that the halcyon days of the city were about 1800 B. C., when this Hyksos power still flourished in Egypt. Then a great stone wall had encircled it besides the older fortifications. In consequence of its increase in population, the city had overflowed into the camp enclosure, so that houses had sprung up there as well, and made it the largest place in southern Syria.

At the date subsequently ascribed to Joshua's invasion of Palestine, the town was not so prosperous, although the great natural strength and position remained; but it had been captured by Thotmes III in 1478 B. C., and had, to some extent, suffered from the overthrow of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings. But it was still an important place and remained a center for horses and chariots. So we read (Josh. 11: 4) of its king and his allies that "they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude with horses and chariots very many."

The narrative goes on to recount the concentration of the allied kings, their fight with Joshua, and their subsequent defeat, and then continues: "And

Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor before time was the head of all these kingdoms, and . . . he burned Hazor with fire . . . but as for the cities that stood still in their strength, Israel burned none of them save Hazor only; that did Joshua burn" (Chap. 11: 10-14). It will be observed from the above, that whoever originally wrote this part of the Book of Joshua is emphatic that Joshua burned Hazor, since he twice affirms it. That reiteration seems to have exasperated modern commentators; for they have been equally emphatic that Joshua did nothing of the sort! Despite the lapse of more than three thousand years, they were able from their armchairs to detect the fact that the destruction of Hazor must be referred to the incidents connected with Sisera and Deborah recorded in the fourth chapter of Judges:

So now there came in the value of excavation and pottery dating to settle the dispute on the spot. Professor Garstang found that the pottery evidence pointed to the fact that the city had been destroyed by fire about the middle of the late Bronze Age (1400 B. C.), long before the date assigned to Deborah by commentators and critics. Could this, then, be the destruction recorded in the Book of Joshua? The answer to the question appears to be suggested by one of the Tel el Amarna letters written about 1380 B. C. by the Egyptian

envoy in the north of Palestine to the reigning Pharaoh. He says: "Let my lord the king recall what Hazor and its king have already had to endure." After Hazor, Professor Garstang decided to seek further evidences of date regarding the Joshua campaigns, so he went to South Palestine in search of it.

Bible students will remember that the capture and destruction of Ai, took place after the fall of Jericho. It is recorded with considerable detail in the eighth chapter of the Book of Joshua. The description of the ambush by which Ai was captured involved references to the surrounding country. The writer of the sacred narrative has been so clear, and so accurate, that a modern tourist when visiting the site, can readily identify the spot where the ambush was laid, where Joshua attacked, and how it all happened. This geographical evidence weighs strongly in favor of the authenticity of the narrative, and to its having been committed to writing at about the time it all happened. Critical endeavors to reconcile this accuracy with their theories, are painstaking, but grotesque. Only two other brief allusions to the account need concern us: "And so it was, that all that fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai . . . and Joshua burnt Ai and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day" (Josh. 8: 25, 28). When we come to describe Jericho, our readers

may be surprised at the smallness of the place. Ai was a larger city than Jericho, and yet its inhabitants only numbered 12,000. The other comment is that the site of Ai has never been reoccupied. It has literally remained a desolation to this day.

[Professor Garstang, on his arrival from the north, proceeded to dig into this heap of ruins. He soon found ample evidence of destruction by fire; and the potsherds like those of Hazor, belonged to the middle of the late Bronze Age. There was nothing later than 1400 B. C.] It was natural after this discovery that the Professor should decide to reopen the excavations of Jericho, the first—and, to Bible readers, the most famous city taken by Joshua. The ensuing pages of this book tell of the results gleaned from four later expeditions to Jericho. But readers may like to know now that potsherds found there, in this preliminary dig, told the same tale as those of Hazor and of Ai.

Here, then, were three ruined cities, Hazor, Ai and Jericho, all destroyed by fire about 1400 B. C.; and in reverse order, all stated in the Bible to have been captured and burnt by Joshua.

This evidence for the correctness of the Book of Joshua was, however, overshadowed by the fact that the potsherds supplied a date of about 1400 B. C. There never had been any unanimity among Bible authorities regarding the date of the Exodus. But there has been a considerable consensus of

opinion during the past generation, that it must have taken place about 1220 B. C. So, allowing for the forty years' wandering of the Israelites in the Wilderness, Jericho should have been captured and burnt about 1180 B. C. Yet, here the potsherds were recording an earlier date by over two centuries! Admitting that the pottery dating was only approximate, and might not be exact to within five-and-twenty years, an approximation of 220 years was quite another story.

Thus, on Professor Garstang's return to England, we considered the subject in all its bearings, and decided that further and fuller excavations at Jericho would be likely to furnish the key to the puzzle; so the following winter Professor Garstang and his staff returned to resume work there.

Here it may be helpful to insert a few geographical and historical details about Jericho, for the benefit of readers who have not visited Palestine.

Modern Jericho is situated on the western side of the plain of Jordan, near to where that river enters the Dead Sea. The site of ancient Jericho, the scene of four more years' excavation, lies half a mile farther away from the river towards the mountains which roll up to the Promised Land far above.

The Jericho that is so often mentioned in the New Testament, was the Roman city of that name; and it occupied a site rather above, and outside modern Jericho on the road that afterwards enters

the mountain passes and leads to Jerusalem. According to Josephus (*Wars*, Book 4, 8, 3), Roman Jericho must have been a delightful winter resort, shaded by palm trees. He writes as follows:

"There are in it many sorts of palm trees different from each other in taste and name; the better sort of them when they are pressed, yield an excellent kind of honey, not much inferior in sweetness to other honey. This country withal produces honey from bees; it also bears that balsam which is the most precious of all the fruits in that place, cypress trees also, and those that bear myrobalanum; so that he who should pronounce this place to be divine, would not be mistaken, wherein is such plenty of trees produced as are very rare, and of the most excellent sort. . . .

"In summer time this country is then so sadly burnt up that nobody cares to come to it . . . as in winter again it becomes warm, and if you go into it, it appears very gentle. The ambient air is here also of so good a temperature that the people of the country are clothed in linen only, even when snow covers the rest of Judæa."

Roman Jericho was also distinguished by the winter palace of Herod the Great, and a Roman Hippodrome. Josephus records the fact that Herod himself died at his Jericho palace, and so saved the lives of the most illustrious of his Jewish subjects whom he was planning to massacre in the Hippodrome. So much for the Roman Jericho, the city associated with the ministry of Jesus



Christ—ruined mounds, and the remains of aqueducts, still testify to its existence.

[The site of the original Jericho, more remote from the river on the sandy plain, was no doubt chosen for the sake of the adjoining springs of Ain-el-Sultan and Ain-el-Duk. To the tourist the ruins appear to be an egg-shaped cluster of sand mounds. The city that stood here when the Israelites approached the Jordan from its eastern side, barred the route to the western plateau. It also controlled the only copious supply of pure water on the western side of the Jordan for something like twenty-five miles. Jericho was thus the gateway to the Promised Land.]

In an earlier chapter reference is made to the fact that in the East it was customary to rebuild cities time after time on the same site, the ruins of the previous city being levelled and used for the foundations of the next one. This was done on the site of the original Jericho.

Professor Garstang has dated the earliest occupation from B. C. 2500 to B. C. 2100. As already mentioned its single wall consisted of large clay slabs banded with thick layers of bituminous earth, after a Babylonian fashion. The next city above it belonged to the Middle Bronze Age pottery period. Its wall was some ten feet thick, and built of large grey bricks, it has been traced round three sides of the city. On the east side near the Spring it was supported by a tower, parts of which still

remain, then some sixty feet high. Evidence in its strata is again apparent of Babylonian culture and influence and the explorer assigns a date of B. C. 2100-1900 to it, but Petrie's dating would probably place it much earlier. The third city, according to an Egyptian scarab of the thirteenth dynasty, included the Hyksos period. [The city then covered the whole mound, which was entirely surrounded by a stone glacis crowned with a brick parapet at occupation level, and further protected by an outer ditch. The area thus enclosed was about twelve acres. It now included the Spring, and this expansion marked its greatest cultural and material prosperity. This city was destroyed, and its ramparts dismantled at the close of the Hyksos period, probably by the avenging Pharaohs.] Its successor, built on the same site in the late Bronze Age (1600-1200 B. C.) forms the subject of this narrative. Those who desire further details of the earlier occupations are referred to Professor Garstang's book, *The Foundations of Bible History—Joshua, Judges* (Harper & Brothers).

Traces of a still later occupation are also to be found; but it was of a partial character. Bible students will remember that after its destruction, Joshua put a curse on the site: "Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it" (Chap. 6: 26)

In 1 Kings 16: 34, we read, that this curse was fulfilled in the time of the wicked king Ahab: "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho; he laid the foundations thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates in the loss of his youngest son Segub."

The evidence left of this occupation cannot be assigned to an earlier date than about 900 B. C., which would correspond to the time indicated in the Bible narrative.

Thus a period of over five centuries appears to have elapsed before this attempt was made, and its disastrous consequences probably caused the final abandonment of the site. What afterwards became the site of Roman Jericho may have succeeded it.

Such was the outward appearance of the remains of ancient Jericho—such was the lie of the surrounding land.

The early part of each of the succeeding years of 1930, 1931, 1932 and 1933 found Professor Garstang, with some hundred and more workers, engaged in digging into these sand-covered ruins. It will be seen that the results obtained carry consequences and conclusions of far-reaching importance. It is not usual for archæological work to tell a complete story. As a general rule the information gleaned is too fragmentary to be appreciated by the general public. Many more excavations in other places are needed to piece the fragments to-

gether. But here in the mounds of ancient Jericho the evidence was complete.

The examination of potsherds dug out of the debris of the city was on a much more extensive and systematic scale than on the preliminary expedition in 1929. [So great was the importance of verifying the date of the destruction, that, in 1930, Professor Garstang and his wife cleaned and examined no fewer than sixty thousand fragments from the strata of the burned city. At the expedition in the following year (1931) another forty thousand fragments were treated in a similar manner. They all attested to the same date, that of the middle of the late Bronze Age (1400 B. C.) before the infiltration of the Mykenean ware.]

In the preceding chapter reference has been made to the very generally accepted belief that the Exodus had taken place more than two centuries later than the date supplied by the potsherds. It is not easy for authorities on any subject to change their views on important questions; and rather than do so in the present instance, the system of pottery dating, at least so far as Jericho was concerned, was called in question.

It was fortunate, therefore, that [in the course of the 1931 expedition another discovery was made which enabled the excavators to check the date of the potsherds taken from the debris of the burnt city. Professor Garstang then succeeded in finding the necropolis, or cemetery, where the inhabi-

tants of Jericho had buried their dead from the earliest times. The site lay between the city mounds and the western hills, in the neighborhood of a small valley that leads down to the north end of the ruins.] Covered over and concealed by the sand of the plain, the tombs had escaped the notice of countless generations of plunderers, and their contents lay intact.

[In 1932, they yielded a rich hoard of fifteen hundred unbroken pottery vessels of all periods of the Bronze Ages. Mingled with them were bronze weapons and trinkets, such as bead necklaces of carnelian, shell, and bone, and a number of bone flutes. There was also a human headed vase of a quite uncanny character. But, far more important than all, was the presence in some of the richer tombs of scarabs inscribed with the royal cartouche of the reigning Pharaoh. These scarabs, eighty in all, served to date the pottery in their particular tombs, which in turn could be compared with the broken ones found in the burnt city.]

As the opening of tombs proceeded, it was found that the later dated ones were farther away from the city. Special attention was therefore paid to them in order to find the latest interments. [In due course a number of tombs were opened that proved to belong to the century 1500-1400 B. C. and included the royal tombs of the period. There were found a succession of eighty scarabs bearing the cartouches of the eighteenth dynasty Pharaohs.

In one was unearthed scarabs bearing the joint names of Princess Hatshepsut and Thotmes III (1501-1487 B. C.) and in another two royal seals of Amenhetep III (1413-1377 B. C.). As the series of dated scarabs all come to an end with the two royal seals of Amenhetep III, there is evidence, quite independent of the pottery, that the city also ceased to exist during that period. For the two centuries that followed there were no interments, the very distinctive pottery and decoration of the time of Akhenaten and Tutonkhamen was not represented at all. Thus everything pointed to the reign of Amenhetep III (1413-1377 B. C.) as marking the period when Jericho fell.] Efforts to obtain an even closer approximation are made in a later chapter.

## IX

### JERICHO'S WALLS AND INTERIOR— THEIR TESTIMONY

THE walls of Jericho! Does anything else from the Old Testament so linger in the memories of our childhood? The old picture Bibles contained wonderful illustrations of gigantic walls, toppling over, as Joshua and the priests, in full vestments, with trumpeters blowing, encircled them in their march. Let us see to what extent reality confirms all these conceptions.

[The excavations revealed the fact that the walls themselves did, on the whole, justify such pictures. They consisted of two parallel walls built of sun-dried bricks. The outer wall was six feet thick, and the inner one about double that width. Both appear to have been about thirty feet high, with a fifteen feet space between them.

Careful examinations disclosed the fact that these formidable defences must have been somewhat faulty in construction. The bricks were sun-dried and contained no binding straw. Some of them were as much as twenty-two inches in length, while others were much smaller. And though all were about four inches thick, still the variations

made it difficult to keep uniformity in the courses; so there were differences of level, and occasional gaps. These were filled up with mud mortar, but the work appears to have left much to be desired.

Again, the foundations consisted of several layers of stones gathered from the neighborhood, which were also of different sizes, and were not evenly laid. In addition to all this, both walls suffered from faulty foundations, the inner one having been built to overhang the remains of a much earlier wall, partly in ruins; and the outer one on debris at the very edge of the mound on which the city stood.] In reading the fuller and more technical description of Professor Garstang, one is inclined to wonder if the expression "jerry built" was originally "Jericho built." Across or astride these great parallel walls, houses had, in places, been built, which thus linked them together. These ties may have been regarded as a source of strength, but as eventualities turned out they proved a source of weakness.

The second chapter of the Book of Joshua tells how Joshua sent two spies into Jericho, and how the two came into the house of an harlot whose name was Rahab. Here, in justice to Rahab, it should be said that the word "harlot" in this context perhaps only means an innkeeper. This woman afterwards appears to have married Salmon, the father of Boaz, who in turn married Ruth the Moabitess. Rahab figures in the royal genealogy



(Matt. 1: 5) as one of the ancestresses of King David.

However that may be, we read in Joshua 2: 15 that "her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall."

We now come to an aspect of ancient Jericho where the excavations do not confirm the conceptions of our youth. [Though the walls themselves, at least to outward appearance, were so formidable, the area they enclosed only measures seven acres. The whole circumference of the city was about six hundred and fifty yards.] Our disappointment is somewhat modified by the fact that the Jebusite Jerusalem which David captured, and which the Palestine Exploration Fund excavated in 1925-6-7, was about the same size. Schliemann experienced a like disillusionment in 1873 when he excavated the city of Troy which Homer tells us so long withstood the Grecian hosts. Indeed, it would almost seem that these ancient cities were more in the nature of places of refuge resorted to on the approach of an enemy. Under peaceful conditions a large proportion of the inhabitants of Jericho would dwell outside the walls under the palm trees to the east of the city. In early times these groves of palms appear to have made the Plain of Jordan a much more acceptable place of residence than it is to-day; and allusion has already been made to the deterioration of climate since the time of Abraham.



### OLD JERICHO RECONSTRUCTED

From a painting made on the site by Miss M. Ratcliffe, after the excavations in 1932.



But to return to the walls of Jericho. How came these formidable defences to collapse at the sound of Joshua's trumpets? The Press reports of the excavations brought the author quite a number of letters from those who had their pet theories to account for the phenomena. At one time Professor Garstang himself was inclined, with some reservation, to the idea that the wall might have been undermined; and that timber, used to hold up the foundations, was fired when the Israelites on the seventh day commenced to encompass the city seven times. In his book the Professor gives a certain amount of prominence to this theory; but in a postscript at the end (p. 404), he adds that the 1931 investigations pointed to an earthquake as the cause of the catastrophe.

The 1932 and 1933 excavations have completely exploded the theory of a pious fraud on the part of Joshua. The walls *had fallen outwards quite flat* in various places, particularly on the west side of the city which alone had remained undisturbed by the German excavators. In 1932 a thorough examination of the outer wall disclosed the fact that it had either slipped, or been pushed over the brink of the slope on which it stood. The debris, on the surface which had suggested possible undermining, was cleared away. It was then found that the striations of the natural soil both under the foundations, and under the surface on which the walls fell, were unbroken and undisturbed from

below; but that these lines had been deflected downwards by the great weight of the walls falling on the surface above.

The unsatisfactory character of the foundations on which the walls stood, and the defective nature of the brick-work as revealed in portions of the walls still standing, no doubt contributed to the catastrophe; while the fact that the walls were tied together by the houses built astride them, linked them in a simultaneous downfall.

Reference has already been made to the Great Rift, far below sea-level, running through Palestine from north to south, and terminating in the Plain of Jordan and the Dead Sea. The tremors of the great earthquake which shook the country in 1927 ran across this Rift from east to west. The buildings inside the burnt city, as well as the walls, bear evidence of a similar great upheaval.

The phenomena that facilitated the crossing of the Jordan by the Israelites give further support to the idea of earthquakes. We are told (Josh. 3: 16, A. R. V.) that when the procession of Israelites, headed by the priests, reached the eastern side of the river then in flood, and so impassable, that "the waters which came down from above stood and rose up in one heap, a great way off at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethán." The site of the city Adam is the modern El Damieh, some sixteen miles above Jericho. Opposite El Damieh, on the other side of the river, is a place called Zarthan, which is

undoubtedly the Zarethan mentioned in the above text. There the Jordan flows rapidly through forty feet high clay banks, which even in normal times are subject to landslides. During the earthquakes of 1927, these banks collapsed, and so dammed the river that no water flowed down for more than twenty-one hours. Here then is a repetition of the phenomena described in the text quoted above, and that in our own time, and associated with seismic disturbances.

That earthquakes were associated with Joshua's crossing of Jordan is also suggested by the following passage in Psalm 114:

"When Israel went forth out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah became his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion. The sea saw it and fled; Jordan was driven back. *The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. . . . Tremble thou earth, at the presence of the Lord.*"

Again we read in Judges 5: 4:

"Lord when thou wentest forth out of Seir, when thou marchest out of the field of Edom, the *earth trembled. . . .*"

There is a popular impression that when incidents like the drying up of Jordan, and the fall of Jericho's walls, can be traced to "natural causes," there is an end of the miracle. Such a

belief is surely a superficial one. Science now openly confesses that we know little or nothing of the nature of natural causes; they may very well, therefore, be due to the action of the Deity. Indeed, the position to-day appears to be that, while the Bible represents God as working through "natural causes," leading scientists now affirm that simple actions of everyday life partake of the nature of miracles. If the Jordan was dried up at the moment when Israel reached its brim; if the walls of Jericho fell just when the trumpets sounded; these "coincidences" testify to the direct action of the Deity although working through natural causes.

So much, then, for the walls of Jericho! So completely did they fall flat outwards in places, that a clear path was opened for the invaders: "The wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city every man straight before him, and they took the city" (Josh. 6: 20). Let us see what Professor Garstang found inside the city as a result of his excavations in 1930, 1931, 1932, and 1933.

<sup>1</sup> As in the case of other cities of the period, the ingress and egress from Jericho seems to have been of a restricted character. The narrative of the visit of the spies conveys the impression that Jericho had but one gateway. "It came to pass about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark . . . and as soon as they which pur-

sued after them were gone out, they shut the gate" (Josh. 2: 5 and 7). The excavations that have been made suggest that this assumption is correct. No gateway has been found in the walls that have been uncovered either on the west, north or south sides of the city. On the other hand, a gate tower has been unearthed on the east side adjacent to the springs of water.

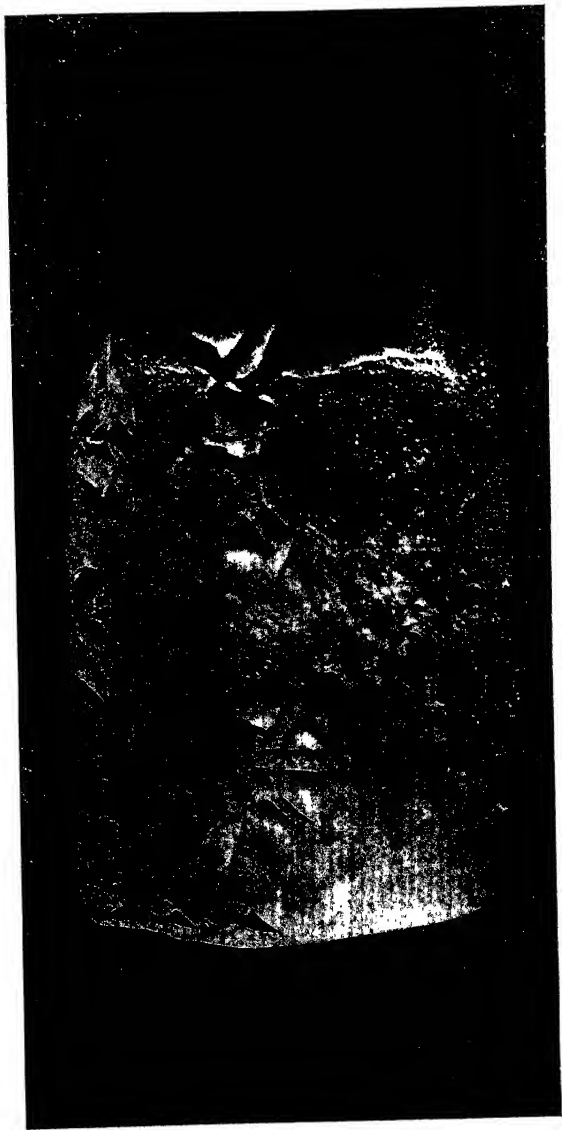
It is an imposing edifice, no less than fifty-four feet long and twenty-four feet wide, remarkably well built of grey brick. Though it shows traces of being one of the oldest buildings in the city, yet its ruins still stand more than sixteen feet high. They contain three deep store chambers extending right down into the foundations. Within the city the ground slopes directly upward from the gate tower to a great building on the mound called Spring Hill, which is believed to be the remains of the royal palace. This edifice seems to have been built round a quadrangular open space. It was explored in 1932 and 1933, and proved to date back to 2000 B. C. or earlier. The palace area overlooked the Spring. The main building, of which little more than its foundations and drainage system remained, stood in the center of the city on the high ground, and had a regular hive of sixty storerooms extending down the slope. The Hyksos scarabs, or seals found in this area, testified to its occupation by the Shepherd Kings. It was obvious that this was once a Hyksos depot of more than local



importance. The inhabitants of the city in Joshua's time, had used these storerooms again, and their contents will be described in due course. Here in the debris on the slope was found the only cuneiform tablet that was discovered. It is illustrated opposite, and its contents as will be seen were too fragmentary to allow of its decipherment. In the uppermost layers of the storerooms of the palace and the area of destruction, were several hundred fragments of painted pottery vases, such as were found intact in the neighboring tombs, in addition to the Cyprian-Phœnician ware. The expert opinion assigns to these distinctive wares a date between 1600-1400 B. C. Similar specimens from the tombs in a more perfect condition were found together with royal Egyptian scarabs, so their date cannot be in doubt.

At the northwest end of the city stood the great citadel, or migdol, whose walls in places still rise to a height of nearly forty feet. They had very substantial foundations, and appear to have suffered least from the earthquake which overthrew the neighboring walls.

It may be conjectured that Rahab's house, or inn, was astride the walls not far from this building; for after the spies had been let down they escaped unseen to the neighboring western hills. We may further deduce from the narrative that Rahab's house did not share the destruction that came from the falling of the walls, since she and



CUNEIFORM TABLET FOUND AT JERICHO

During the 1933 excavations of the Royal Palace this tablet was found but so far it has remained undeciphered. The writing is of the same style as that on the Tel el Amarna Tablets, the language appears to belong to North Syria.



her relatives were saved alive (Josh. 6: 25). The proximity of the citadel certainly appears to have held up the walls in the neighborhood.

A good example of critical methods and conclusions, may be quoted in connection with this incident from *The New Commentary*, p. 194:

"The wall fell down flat is mere literary hyperbole intended to convey the completeness of the victory; and probably nobody would be more amazed than the actual writer to learn that his words were ever required as a point of faith to be understood literally. . . . Had the walls collapsed entirely Rahab and her household could not have escaped."

It is of course straining the sense of the Book of Joshua to infer that the wall fell down flat outwards *entirely* all round the city; but that does not justify the description of the incident as "a mere literary hyperbole." Professor Garstang's discoveries about the walls, as detailed, prove it was nothing of the sort.

But to return to the interior of Jericho: the excavations revealed that the houses of the city were small and clustered together in oriental fashion. Their contents furnished ample evidence that the city had been taken at a time when its inhabitants were pursuing the usual vocations of daily life.

The further fact was revealed that Jericho had been most systematically burnt, although it had not

first been systematically plundered. There, in the houses, were found foodstuffs, such as wheat, barley, lentils, onions, dates and pieces of dough, all reduced to charcoal by the intense heat of the conflagration, and so preserved for more than three thousand years—mute witness to the course of events attending the destruction of Jericho. Why had these foodstuffs been left untouched and uneaten by their captors? The sacred narrative furnishes the answer to the inquiry: "The city shall be devoted, even it and all that is therein, to Jehovah" (Josh. 6: 17). The quotation is taken from the American Standard Version of the Bible. The Authorized Version has: "The city shall be accursed," etc., which does not bring out the full sense of the Hebrew original. The expression "devoted to the Lord," signifies "set apart for sacrifice." Later we read (Josh. 6: 18): "And ye in any wise keep yourselves from the devoted thing, lest when ye have devoted it, ye take of the devoted thing; so should ye make the camp of Israel accursed, and trouble it. . . ." Now we know why the foodstuffs were untouched, and their subsequent fate is also described (Josh. 6: 24): "And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein."

Professor Garstang, so impressed with the extent of the conflagration and the thickness of the burnt strata enveloping the ruins, came to the conclusion that Joshua and his men, after the capture,

systematically collected wood and other combustible material from all round the district, to make one huge bonfire of the "devoted" city.

Reference has just been made to the interior of the palace. There was found ample confirmation of the evidence supplied by the interior of the houses. To quote Professor Garstang's own words:

"Every room in the palace area tells the same tale of walls half fallen, reddened by fire amid layers of white ashes and masses of charcoal, rising through and above the ruins. The storerooms were filled with great pottery vessels ranged in rows, and, though now crushed to fragments and their contents burnt, some of them may be seen to have been filled with grain and other foodstuffs, while some were sealed up and still show the dregs of their once fluid contents.

"In and among the debris of these great store vessels are found the remains of smaller vases which, apparently protected by the others, have in some cases partially escaped destruction. Twenty-six have been found in a single room. They correspond with the objects taken from the dated tombs, and they will give us that decisive evidence which we came to seek as to the date of the final overthrow of the Bronze Age city."

Later, he writes:

"Now we were able to compare whole jars and vases piece by piece from those of the dated tombs. They all proved to be types of the fifteenth century

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B. C., not a single specimen was found in the palace rooms which could be assigned to the familiar period of Akhenaten (1377-1361 B. C.).”

An analysis of the contents of the tombs gave parallel results. The pottery series includes plentifully the painted wares, and Cypro-Phœnician imports, distinctive of late Bronze Age 1, but only eight vessels that might be assigned independently to a later date than 1400 B. C. An examination of the scarabs is conclusive; to the number of one hundred and sixty-five, they range continuously through the Hyksos period and early eighteenth dynasty of Egypt. They comprised the Egyptian royal names Hatshepsut and Thotmes III, to the reign of Amenhetep III, when the series comes to an abrupt end. Let us turn now to the chronology based on such convincing evidence, and compare it further with other dates of the period.

## X

### THE DATE OF THE EXODUS

**T**HE reasons which have prompted many scholars to conclude that the Exodus took place after the death of Rameses II, 1229 B. C., are due to the mention of that name in Genesis and Exodus. In Genesis 47: 11 we read: "And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses as Pharaoh had commanded."

Here the passage, taken as it stands, would lead us to believe that Joseph lived in the days of Rameses, contrary altogether to the Bible chronology which represents the Israelites as being four hundred and thirty years in Egypt. Joseph lived at the commencement of that period, while Moses lived at the end. Here then is evidence that the expression "the land of Rameses," was a description given to a district of Egypt at a much later date. The next passage which bears upon the subject is Exodus 1:11 which reads: "And they [the Israelites] built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses," and again later (Chap. 12: 37), we are told that after the Exodus "the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth."

Bearing in mind the suggestion obtained from the first passage quoted, we are entitled to consider whether this place Rameses may not have been so called at a later date. The original name for New York was New Amsterdam, yet later writers, although dealing with events which occurred when it was New Amsterdam, would still call it New York. In England the Roman name for York was Eboracum, but later writers would use the name York.

A further consideration is the suggestion in *The Speakers' Commentary* that Rameses may have been an old name dating from the reign of Aohmes I, the founder of the eighteenth dynasty (see next page). Efforts to locate the cities of Pithom and Rameses have all been unsatisfactory, so far as throwing any clear light on the problem goes. Rameses II was a notorious appropriator of the work of past generations, and habitually erased the names of his predecessors, and inserted his own.

The element of uncertainty which has in the past hung round the date of the Exodus, does not seem to have been shared by the Egyptian chronology of the corresponding period. Rightly or wrongly, Egyptologists are fairly well agreed regarding the dates of the Pharaohs of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties. The following list is compiled from Sir Flinders Petrie's article in *Ancient Egypt* (March, 1931) entitled "A Revision of History."

## EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY

Aohmes I . . .	1573-1560 B. C.
Amenhetep I . . .	1560-1539 "
Thotmes I . . .	1539-1514 "
Thotmes II . . .	1514-1501 "
Thotmes III . . .	1501-1447 "
Amenhetep II . . .	1447-1423 "
Thotmes IV . . .	1423-1413 "
Amenhetep III . . .	1413-1377 "
Akhenaten . . .	1377-1361 "

Those who have just finished reading the last chapter will remember that Jericho was destroyed in the reign of Amenhetep III, the last but one on this list. The evidence of date supplied by the pottery fragments on the burnt site, has been checked by similar but unbroken pottery vessels, which are in turn dated by the Egyptian scarabs found side by side with them in the necropolis. Of equal importance is the fact that the series of scarabs of the earlier Pharaohs of Egypt, from the Hyksos down through the eighteenth dynasty, all come to an abrupt end with two of this Amenhetep III.

The scarab evidence seems extremely hard to dispute—if Jericho was destroyed say half a century earlier, how came Amenhetep III scarabs in the tombs? If two centuries later, what has become of all later scarabs? Unless further evidence should come to light, the reign of Amenhetep III (1413-1377), constitutes a reliable basis from

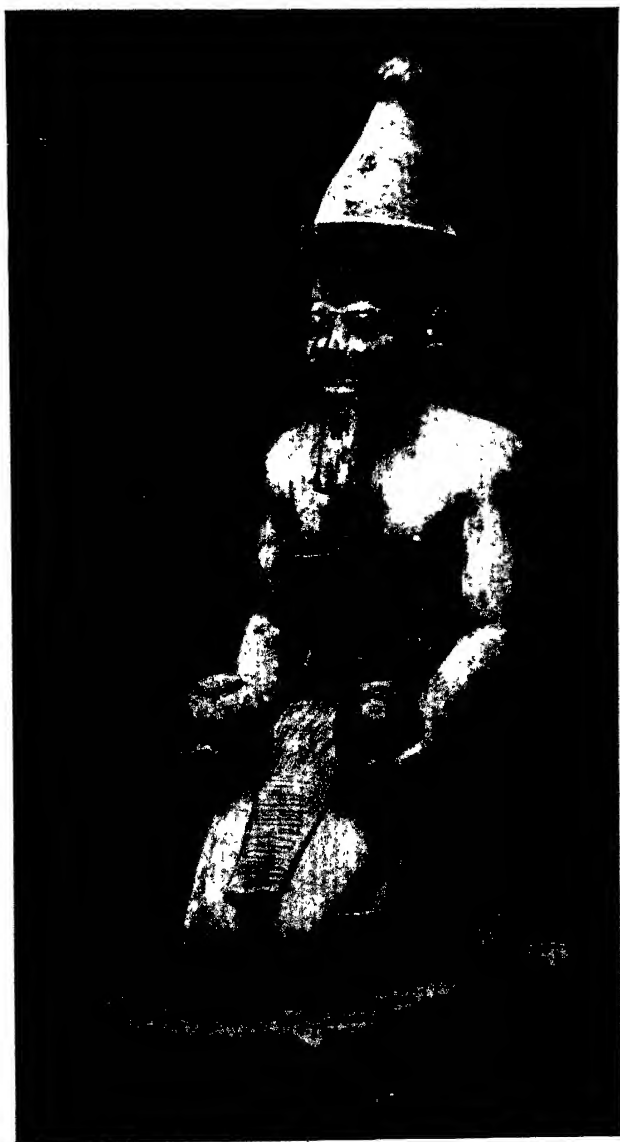
which to calculate the date of the Exodus. Since we know that after the Exodus, Israel wandered forty years in the wilderness before the capture of Jericho, we have only to add forty, to both the beginning and end of Amenhetep's reign, to obtain a correct interval of time within which the Exodus should have taken place.

It will be noticed that the interval thus obtained (1453-1417) falls within the reigns of several Pharaohs. Can we find any evidence which will give a closer approximation? The Book of Exodus furnishes a clue, for after describing Moses' flight from Egypt and sojourn in Midian, it goes on to narrate (Chap. 2: 23): "And it came to pass in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died." There follows the return of Moses to Egypt, the ten plagues and the Exodus.

Now when we refer to the Egyptian chronology on the previous page, we observe that three kings of Egypt died between 1453 and 1417. They were:

Thotmes III in 1447, Amenhetep II in 1423,  
and Thotmes IV in 1413.

But the verse quoted above suggests that the king who died had reigned for a long time, and that he was the king from whom Moses had fled. According to other passages in the Bible, Moses had been absent from Egypt about forty years (Acts 7: 30).



AMENHETEP II

The Pharaoh of the Exodus. (1447-1423 B.C.) He succeeded  
Thotmes III. (*Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.*)



These two considerations enable us to identify Thotmes III as the king in whose reign Moses fled from Egypt; and this monarch's long reign of fifty-four years (1501-1447) more than satisfies the forty years of Moses' absence. The Exodus must, therefore, have taken place after Thotmes III's death in 1447 B. C. and during the reign of Amenhetep II.

For the moment let us leave these calculations, that depend upon dates derived from the Jericho excavations, and refer to Bible chronology. Most of our readers are aware, that the dates in the margins at the head of the columns in the Authorized Version of the Bible, only represent the calculations of Archbishop Usher, and cannot be taken as authoritative. But the number of years given in the following text has nothing to do with Usher's calculations, and since it specifies the interval of time which elapsed between the two most important events in early Bible history—that is to say, the Exodus from Egypt and the founding of Solomon's Temple—it is likely to be strictly correct. The passage runs as follows: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel . . . that he began to build the house of the Lord" (1 Kings 6: 1).

The date of the foundation of Solomon's Temple should be known to the Freemasons, whose ritual



is said to be associated with the building of it. But information from that source seems unavailable; either members do not know, or they are not prepared to say.

*The Cambridge Ancient History* places the accession of Solomon at 970 B. C.; Sir Flinders Petrie in a recent article in *Ancient Egypt* fixes it at 960 B. C. On the basis of these figures, Solomon's fourth year would be either 967 or 957 B. C. If we accept a margin of dates between these two periods inclusive, for the founding of the Temple, that seems about as near as we can reach with present knowledge. And it is interesting to notice, that computations from data supplied by the Jewish historian Josephus, work out at B. C. 966. When the 480 years are added to these figures, we arrive at some interval between B. C. 1447 and 1437 for the date of the Exodus. But the dates postulated by the archæological evidence fall between 1447 B. C. and 1417 B. C., and the latter is quite an extreme outside limit.

This very remarkable agreement with the Jericho discoveries carries a great deal of conviction that the figures must be correct.

For to put the figures the reverse way round, when one subtracts the forty years' wandering in the wilderness from this Bible chronology (1447-1437), based on its modern Solomonic dates, we find that Jericho fell between 1407 and 1397. Since Amenhetep III began his reign in 1413, either

of these dates would allow sufficient time for two of his scarabs to be buried in Jericho's necropolis. Thus, so far as one can judge in these matters, our readers will probably agree that the dates, within which these important Old Testament events must fall, have now been put on a sound and acceptable basis.

Preference will perhaps be given to the later date, *i. e.*, B. C. 1397 for Jericho's fall, both because it allows another ten years of Amenhetep III's reign for the burial of the scarabs, and also because it appears more nearly to link up with the assumed dating of the Tel el Amarna letters referred to in a later chapter.

One of the "assured results" evolved through the incorrect assumption that the Exodus took place in 1220, and that Joshua and his men entered Canaan in 1180, has already been cited in the Introduction. It cast doubts on the bulk of the Israelites ever having been in Egypt at all! Other distortions of the sacred narrative are due to the same initial mistake. It is a testimony to the correctness of our Jericho dating that it preserves the integrity of the sacred text. Whereas, before, critics were entangled in a mass of confusions and contradictions, which were used to discredit the Pentateuch as well as the Book of Joshua, these disappear in the light of the correct dates.

As a number of devout Bible students have placed the Exodus at 1487 B. C. it seems expedient

to examine this earlier date with the evidence before us.

The date is arrived at by interpreting 1 Kings 6:1 to mean 480 years from the entry into Canaan, and making the "going out of Egypt" to represent the forty years in the wilderness.

The Septuagint, or Greek version of the Old Testament, translated from the original Hebrew into Greek about 300 B. C., reads: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and fortieth year after the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt . . ." This suggests that the 480 years of our Authorized Version includes the time in the wilderness, while the Septuagint date does actually run from the entry into Canaan. That would make the two agree. But to make the 480 years run from the entry into Canaan, and so place the Exodus at 1487, and the fall of Jericho at 1447, violates both Egyptian chronology and the record of the Jericho scarabs. Unless the Egyptian chronology of this period, which is at present generally accepted, is quite wrong, the year 1487 B. C. was the fourteenth year of Thotmes III's reign, while he was still associated on the throne with the Princess Hatshepsut. Who then was the king of Egypt whose death brought Moses' return from Midian? It could only have been Thotmes II who deceased fourteen years earlier. That would involve an interval of fourteen years for Moses to return from Midian to Egypt, which seems altogether too long.

While, since Thotmes II only reigned thirteen years, the interval between when Moses fled from Egypt and the death of the king is altogether too short. In that case, also, the Princess Hatshepsut, deduced in the next chapter as Moses' patron, was in reality his bitter enemy.

But the 1487 date becomes even more impossible to maintain against the evidence of Jericho's scarabs. If Jericho fell in 1447, there should have been an entire absence of the scarabs of the succeeding kings—Amenhetep II, Thotmes IV and Amenhetep III in its necropolis. The presence of these is fatal to the theory, unless, of course, there is a mistake in chronology and all these Pharaohs really reigned before B. C. 1447. A possible contingency, but for this period of Egyptian chronology an improbable one.

The Egyptian historian Manetho, quoted though he be somewhat scornfully by Josephus, yet places the Exodus of the Israelites in the reign of a certain king Amenophis. Our own Egyptian authorities, from certain other indications of this monarch, have long identified him with Amenhetep II, in whose reign, according to the Jericho calculations, the Exodus took place.

## XI

### MOSES

**T**HE dates derived from the Jericho excavations, whether from pottery or scarabs, agree so remarkably with the chronology of both Egypt and of the Bible, that it seems justifiable to ascertain whether they will throw any further light on events of that period.

In doing this we are, to some extent, passing into the region of conjecture, but it is conjecture resting on a much sounder basis than what has satisfied the leading commentators of the past thirty years.

In Deuteronomy 31:2, immediately before his death, Moses is represented as saying that he was one hundred and twenty years old. He was, therefore, eighty years old when the Exodus took place, and about forty years old when he fled from Egypt to Midian (Acts 7: 23, 29). This suits the Egyptian history of the period in a rather remarkable manner.

If Moses was in Midian during the greater part of the last forty years of the fifty-four years' reign of Thotmes III, it is a significant fact that for the first sixteen years this monarch was subservient on the throne to the Princess Hatshepsut. This lady

was also the real ruler of the kingdom during the whole of the thirteen years' reign of the previous monarch, Thotmes II. Hatshepsut was the only surviving daughter of Thotmes I and his Queen Aahmes or Ahmose. Her mother was a daughter of Amenhetep I, and was of royal blood by both parents. Thus Hatshepsut had a unique claim to the throne, of which only her sex debarred her from taking full advantage. Neither her father, nor Thotmes II, nor Thotmes III, possessed such qualifications; they all had mothers who were of inferior rank. Hatshepsut on the other hand was the descendant of the old Theban princes, who had fought and expelled the Shepherd Kings, and there appears to have been a strong party in Egypt who regarded the blood of this line as alone entitled to royal honors. Her father Thotmes I seems to have tried to secure her direct succession; anyhow she is said to have taken a leading part in the government of Egypt before the reign of Thotmes II. Now both our chronology, and the unique career of this remarkable woman, suggest that she was the daughter of Pharaoh who found Moses in the ark of bulrushes afloat on the Nile (Ex. 2: 5). The Jewish historian Josephus tells about events in the life of Moses not recorded in the Book of Exodus: in particular he recounts incidents which seem to connect with the activities of Hatshepsut far up the Nile. Josephus represents Moses as commanding an Egyptian army, and be-

sieging the city of Meroe near the junction of the Blue and White Nile. Against this may be placed the fact that in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, and in his controversy *contra Apion*, he seems to contradict himself as to the length of time the Israelites were in Egypt, and the precise date of the Exodus. He does, however, mention the name of the princess who found Moses in the ark of bulrushes. He says it was "Thermuthis," in which we see an echo of the name Thotmes, or Tahutmes, which was borne by each of the three Pharaohs in whose reigns Hatshepsut played such a leading part. Again what has been said about her royal descent, and what is known besides of the lady's history, are quite in harmony with the statement that she was ready to recognize Moses as her son (Heb. 11: 24). And it is also remarkable that the time of her death so closely coincides with the flight of Moses from Egypt to Midian. If Moses had been Hatshepsut's favorite, he had little mercy to expect from Thotmes III. For, after her death, this Pharaoh so detested her memory, that he destroyed or defaced her monuments.

Nor do coincidences seem to end with the death of Hatshepsut and Moses' flight to Midian. The further career of Thotmes III has also a considerable bearing upon the Old Testament narrative.

From previous chapters it will be understood that Palestine and Syria were well known to the



THOTMES III

The Pharaoh of the Oppression (1501-1447 B.C.) and the greatest conqueror in Egyptian History. (*Photo of statue in the Cairo Museum.*)





Semitic invaders of Egypt, and consequently to the Semitic Pharaohs or Hyksos Kings as long as they ruled that country. But this country of Canaan, promised to Abraham and his descendants, seems to have been little known to the native Egyptians until their own Pharaohs of the eighteenth dynasty drove out the Hyksos and in turn invaded and conquered it. It was those Pharaohs, whose names and dates figure at the commencement of the previous chapter, that made expeditions into Palestine and through it to Syria. This was all long after Joseph had ruled in Egypt, and the Israelites had been settled in the land of Goshen.

It is recorded that Amenhetep I (1560-1539) raided all Syria, and so did his successor Thotmes I (1539-1514), who even crossed the Euphrates. But during the supremacy of the Princess Hatshepsut (1514-1487), Egyptian attention appears to have been directed southwards rather than northwards. As already indicated, we read of expeditions up the Nile, and of fleets of ships that went by sea to central Africa. In a later chapter reference is also made to Hatshepsut's activities in the peninsula of Sinai.

But after her death Thotmes III commenced, and carried out, a systematic series of invasions and conquests of Palestine and Syria, such as no Pharaoh before or after ever achieved. He made seventeen great expeditions into these countries, captured the cities, and broke down their defences.

The accounts of these campaigns, engraven in Egyptian hieroglyphics on temple walls and monuments, are reproduced by modern writers of ancient history. We read for example a detailed narrative of Thotmes III's great battle at Megiddo in North Palestine. On a grander scale, it reminds us of Joshua's surprise attack on Ai, referred to in an earlier chapter. And there at Megiddo, Thotmes captured nine hundred chariots, two thousand two hundred horses, two hundred suits of armor, and so on. Certainly the chariots and horses are reminiscent of the Shepherd Kings' occupation. Less than a century later, hard by Megiddo, it is recorded in the Bible that Joshua put to flight the Northern Confederation of Kings "with chariots and horses very many."

When we read these Egyptian records of Thotmes III, the question forces itself upon us—"Why must commentators assume that Moses never wrote down his records?" For Moses was *actually living* in Midian *at the very time* all these seventeen campaigns were fought and recorded on monuments, "and Moses was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt" (Acts 7: 22). So it seems preposterous to assume that all Moses said, and did, was handed down by oral tradition for eight centuries. After Thotmes III's death, and the Exodus in the reign of Amenhetep II, this later Pharaoh, as well as Thotmes IV, pursued to some extent the same policy of conquest and subjugation.

tion of Palestine and Syria. That would be during the forty years while Israel was in the wilderness.

Can we connect all this with the Bible narrative? Here was Canaan, a land then intensely cultivated with vines and olive trees, oaks and fig trees on the hillsides, and cornfields and pastures in the valleys; but a country defended by a multitude of cities, small, it is true, but with very formidable defences and warlike inhabitants. These had, however, notoriously been weakened, and even destroyed, in the campaigns of Thotmes III. It was Moses' opportunity, immediately after the Exodus, to lead the Israelites into the land promised to their forefathers. He proposed to do so, and sent twelve spies as a preliminary for that purpose. These brought back the following report: "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us; and surely it floweth with milk and honey; . . . nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled and very great" (Num. 13: 27, 28). This report so discouraged the Israelites that they neglected the opportunity, and were condemned to wander many years more in the wilderness. Meanwhile, Amenhetep II and Thotmes IV continued the work of destruction, and so reduced the fighting force of the country, that its inhabitants became dependent upon the power of their suzerain Egypt.

Is there anything in the Pentateuch, or the Book of Joshua, to justify the supposition that these

attacks of Egypt paved the way for Israel's conquest of Canaan? There are three remarkable passages, the first of which is in Exodus 23: 28-30: "I will send *hornets* before thee which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite and the Hittite from before thee. I will not drive them out from before thee in one year: lest the land become desolate . . . by little and little I will drive them out before thee."

A second reference to this mysterious insect the hornet is made in Deuteronomy 7: 20: "Moreover the Lord thy God will send *the hornet* among them until they that are left and hide themselves, perish from before thee." And lastly, after the conquest had been made, Joshua reminds the people (Chap. 24: 12) of these words: "And I sent *the hornet* before you which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites: but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow." Professor Garstang's book contains the illuminating reminder that *the Hornet was the badge of Thotmes III and his successors*. This figurative allusion to the power of Egypt, as we shall see later, has a very important bearing in enabling us to understand some of the perplexities which confront us, when we come to consider the narrative of Israel's subsequent sojourn in Palestine as recorded in the Book of Judges.

We revert now to the story of Moses' sojourn in the Land of Midian. The cause of his flight

there from Egypt, when about forty years of age, is set out as follows:

“He [Moses] spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way, and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared and said, Surely the thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father, he said, How is it that ye are come so soon to-day? And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew water enough for us, and watered the flock. And he said unto his daughters, And where is he? Why is it that ye have left the man? call him that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter” (Ex. 2: 11-21).

A few verses later Reuel is called Jethro, so he has been accredited with the double name Reuel Jethro.

According to the Bible Moses spent forty years in Midian, and something ought to be learned about the country. Midian was the name of one of Abraham's sons by Keturah (Gen. 25: 1-2), and the land takes its name from him. Closely associated with the Midianites were the Ishmaelites, also descended from Abraham, through Hagar the Egyptian.

The earliest mention both of Midianites and Ishmaelites occurs in the story of Joseph and his brethren. After the former had been put in the pit, "there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver" (Gen. 37: 28).

The title of "merchantmen" associates the Midianites with trade, probably in this case between Syria, Egypt, and the Red Sea.

The location of the country of Midian has been already described in our chapter on geography. There are traditions there of Moses' residence. As long ago as the days of the Crusades, one writer says: "Near Madyan is the well and at it a rock which Moses uprooted." This Madyan lies inland about two-thirds of the way down the Gulf of Akaba.

In the year 1877, the celebrated traveler, Sir Richard Burton, went on an expedition to Midian on behalf of the Khedive of Egypt. His quest was for a gold mine, but the samples of mineral which

he brought back for analysis in Cairo, did not appear to have contained enough gold to encourage further efforts. However, Burton made a second expedition to the country and a summary of his report will interest our readers. He wrote in *The Land of Midian* (Pref. xxiv):

“We who have traveled through a country like Midian finding everywhere extensive works for metallurgy; barrages and aqueducts, cisterns and tanks; furnaces, fire brick, and scoriæ; open mines and huge scatters of spalled quartz; with the remains of some eighteen cities and towns—we cannot but form a different and far higher idea of its mineral capabilities than those who determine them by simple inspection of a few samples.”

The analysis of the samples Burton brought back, indicated that the land contained copper in the north, and apparently gold in the south, and also abundance of iron ore. The whole country is extremely wild and rocky, and the interior is still but little known. The quantities of smelting furnaces along the coast suggest that the gold from Ophir, wherever Ophir may have been, was brought up the Red Sea in ships, and then smelted, and brought overland. In the days of King Solomon we read of this traffic, in which the Phœnicians also participated. For information about that we refer our readers to 1 Kings 9: 26–28, 1 Kings 10: 11–14, or 2 Chronicles 8: 17, etc. There seems no



doubt that long before the days of Solomon this land of Midian was a great mining center. And there is evidence that the miners also worked other mines in the Peninsula of Sinai opposite. These people were all of Semitic origin, whether descended from Abraham, as the Midianites, or from South Arabia, the adjacent country. We shall read more about them and their religious beliefs in the next chapter. Some have located the scene of the Book of Job in Midian. Certainly the author of that work, traditionally said to be Moses, was well acquainted with mining, for we read:

“Surely there is a mine for the silver, and a place for gold which they refine. Iron is taken out of the earth, and copper is molten out of the stone. Man setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out, to the furthest bound. The stones of obscurity and thick darkness. He breaketh open a shaft away from where men sojourn; they are forgotten of the foot; they hang afar from men, they swing to and fro. As for the earth, out of it cometh bread: and underneath it is turned up as it were fire. The stones thereof are the place of sapphires [turquoises?] and it hath dust of gold. . . . But where shall wisdom be found?” (Job 28: 1-12, A. S. V.).

It was somewhat in the interior of this country, away from the immediate vicinity of mines and smelting furnaces, that Moses lived for many years keeping sheep for his father-in-law Jethro. Unlike

our English shepherds, the Eastern ones do not drive their sheep, but lead them. So Moses one day led his flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God unto Horeb. Some confusion has been created by a misunderstanding of the meaning of the expression "mountain of God." The association of the tops of hills or mountains with worship, and with communion with the Deity, was a characteristic feature of the ancient Semitic religion. It was even characteristic of Jesus Christ's communion with God; thus Luke 6:12 reads—"And it came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." Again: His Transfiguration occurred on the top of a mountain. So there were other mountains of God besides Horeb. For example, the Psalmist sings: "His foundation is in the holy mountains, the Lord loveth the gates of Zion" (Psalm 87:1, 2), a reference to the hills among which Jerusalem stood, and still stands to-day.

Thus the confusion which has arisen between Mount Sinai in the Sinaitic peninsula, and Mount Horeb in Midian, on the other side of the Gulf of Akaba. Both were "mountains of God"; that is to say both were spots associated with burnt offerings, and worship to the Deity; and possibly also with appearances or Manifestations from the Unseen. In the case of Moses in Midian, the manifestation took the form of the Burning Bush, to

which reference will be made in a later chapter. Moses' long sojourn in Midian was ended by this incident, and he returned to Egypt to call the new Pharaoh to account, and to demand in God's name the release of God's people. During this long residence in Midian, Moses must have had constant contact with primitive Semitic customs, and ceremonies, and ritual, even if he had not already learned and practiced them in Sinai, as will be suggested in the next chapter.

The visit that Jethro, the priest of Midian, afterwards paid Moses, and the proposal he made for the appointment of officials to relieve Moses in the work of government (Ex. 18), have led to the suggestion that in matters of ceremonial Moses was also indebted to him. But Moses would be also familiar with the splendid ceremonies and vestments of Egypt.

During the last few years it has been suggested that the wanderings of the Israelites in the Wilderness occurred in the interior of this land of Midian. That notion has more to be said for it than the wild idea that the wanderings referred to a trek right across Asia! But Sir Flinders Petrie who has explored the Peninsula of Sinai, has pointed out that the geographical details indicated in the Bible apply there; and that if it was not the actual scene of the wanderings, some later writer must have adapted the narrative to suit Sinai. In view of the striking confirmation of the Sacred Narrative in

the case of the Fall of Jericho, we are hardly entitled to assume that elsewhere such changes have been made. In the course of these wanderings in the Wilderness, when the Israelites had come out of the Peninsula of Sinai, and had reached Shittim on the opposite side the Jordan to Jericho, a Midianitish woman brought a bitter punishment upon her people. The battle between the Israelites and the Midianites is recorded in Numbers 31. At a later date this nation also became the instrument of an oppression from which Gideon delivered Israel (Judges 6). As for Hobab, the son of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, he seems to have accepted Moses' invitation to throw in his lot with the Israelites (Num. 10: 29-32). From a reference to him again (Judges 4: 11) we gather that his descendants were called Kenites (see also Judges 1: 16), possibly smiths, or workers in metal.

## XII

### THE EVIDENCE FROM SINAI

**B**ESIDES its reconciliation with both Biblical and Egyptian chronology, the Jericho dating sheds a new significance on past archaeological discoveries.

As long ago as 1904-5, Sir Flinders Petrie led an expedition into the peninsula of Sinai, the wilderness where Israel wandered for the forty years before Jericho was taken. Right in the middle of these barren wastes, on one of the hills, Sir Flinders examined and explored a very ancient temple and shrine called the Temple of Serabit. This sanctuary was associated with the neighboring turquoise mines; it contained a shrine dedicated to Hathor, the "Mistress of Turquoise." The researches revealed the fact that the Egyptian kings had from remote times interested themselves in the mines, and had intermittently organized expeditions to work them. Across the Gulf of Akaba in the land of Midian, as stated in the last chapter, there is ample evidence of mining on a large scale. The peninsula of Sinai has probably always been nominally Egyptian territory. But it was a remote spot for Egypt. The

comparative proximity of Midian, and the mining propensities of its inhabitants, evidences of which remain, both on the Sinai shore of the Gulf of Akaba, as well as on the Midianite side, suggest that the workers in these turquoise mines were Midianites. The reference quoted in the last chapter from the Book of Job seems peculiarly applicable to these turquoise mines. Anyhow this Temple of Serabit in Sinai had been used for a form of worship quite unlike that practised in Egypt.

The name Hathor itself carries no religious significance, since it was used by the Egyptians as a general title for strange goddesses. The type of worship carried on at this temple was associated with burnt sacrifices. The immense heaps of ashes, still remaining, testified all the more to ritual observed, because the rocky site is bare of all trees; and the wood must have been carried up at least one thousand feet from the plain below.

Hill temples, like that of Serabit, are unknown in Egypt, while burnt offerings on High Places are equally foreign to the worship of that country. On the other hand, the system was a distinguishing feature of the Semitic religion from the remotest times as was incidentally noticed in the last chapter in connection with Mt. Horeb. There seems, then, no doubt that the men who worked these mines, even if they were not actually Midianites, belonged to that Semitic race, of which the Israelites were an important part. We are reminded

that God said to Abraham (Gen. 22: 2): "Take now thy son, thine only son whom thou lovest, even Isaac . . . and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." We recall also the dramatic scene on the top of Mount Carmel, and Elijah's sacrifice there after he had "repaired the altar of the Lord that was thrown down" (1 Kings 18: 30). And there are many other illustrations throughout the Old Testament of this custom of sacrificing on High Places.

Another feature of the ritual practised at this temple in Sinai, were the many small stone altars for burning incense. The Egyptians, on the other hand, always burnt incense in a metal shovel. In Exodus 30: 1 we read: "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon." An elaborate system of ablutions must have been associated with the ritual of this Temple of Serabit, for Sir Flinders Petrie found four successive great lavers or tanks. Here, again, we are reminded of the Temple worship as described in Exodus 30: 18-19: "Thou shalt make a laver of brass to wash withal, and thou shalt put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet thereat. . . ." Or, again, we recall the ten lavers that stood in Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 7: 38).

Another feature of Serabit is the number of standing stones associated with sleeping shelters.

These monoliths have been set up obviously for religious purposes. They are of a type unknown in Egypt. Again we are reminded of the Book of Genesis (28: 18), and the occasion of Jacob's dream, and his subsequent action: "And Jacob . . . took the stone that he had put for his pillows and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it."

There were other peculiarities of these Semitic miners who worshipped at the Temple of Serabit. They knew how to keep accounts, and they had a system of alphabetical writing. Besides Egyptian monuments with their characteristic hieroglyphics, there were mysterious signs cut on sphinxes and the like. Alas! Some vandals had smashed up many of these invaluable evidences, but the scraps that remained have received a great deal of attention from scholars during the past thirty years.

The key to the riddle of reading these inscriptions appears to have been found by Dr. Alan H. Gardiner. In a Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1929, he suggested that certain signs represented the word "Balat." This clue was followed up by Mr. Martin Sprengling of the University of Chicago, who claims to have deciphered the inscriptions. The readings largely refer to votive offerings to Balat. One within a mine on the rock is read: "I am the miner Sahmi-lat, foreman of mineshaft No. 4."

Professor Sprengling thinks that this writing was



made in the reign of Amenemhet III, 1850-1800 B. C. But the date that Petrie assigns to this Pharaoh is 2432-2384 B. C. Anyhow it was at a time when intimate relations existed between Egyptians and Semites as we know from Ras Shamra. Traces of this script seem to have been found in Palestine, on a potsherd at Gezer.

But Bible readers are at a loss to understand why Mr. Sprengling, in his pamphlet on the subject, should represent Joshua, or the Israelites, as destroying evidences of writing! And the reason assigned for Moses breaking the tables of stone is a travesty of the Bible narrative!

The fact that alphabetical writing was in existence in Sinai long before Moses, and the fact that it was in use by the Semitic race to which Moses belonged, is strong presumptive evidence in favor of the Israelite use of writing in the wilderness. So far from the Israelites having no use for writing, there are constant references to the art in the Books of Moses, thus:—

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words” (Ex. 34: 27).

“Write thou every man’s name on this rod” (Num. 17: 2).

“Thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thy house” (Deut. 6: 9).

“He shall write her a bill of divorcement” (Deut. 24: 1 and 3).

“Thou shalt write upon them (the plastered

stones) all the words of this law . . . in mount Ebal " (Deut. 27: 3, 4).

"Now therefore write ye this song" (Deut. 31: 19).

"And it came to pass when Moses made an end of writing the words of this law in a book" (Deut. 31: 24).

If we turn onwards to the Book of Joshua we read:—

"And he (Joshua) wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses" (Josh. 8: 32).

Truly Professor Sprengling should consider such passages as these, before he engages in a diatribe against Moses, Joshua, and the Israelites, because "they did not learn to appreciate this glorious gift of the gods." The evidence points in the contrary direction to what he suggests to be the case.

The "glorious gift of writing" was used in the service, not only of gods, but of GOD; indeed it was used to such purpose, that we can read to-day the incomparable literature of the Bible. And the account of the fall of Jericho, as verified by the excavations, testifies to the accuracy of the writers, as well as do other accounts mentioned in this book. This strange complaint by Mr. Sprengling, about neglect of writing by the Israelites, must surely be a product of those fundamentally unsound assumptions to which attention has already been drawn.

But to return to the temple of Serabit. In his expedition of 1904-5 Sir Flinders Petrie found, from the Egyptian monuments there, that the greatest builder and patron of this temple had been the Princess Hatshepsut when associated with Thotmes III. Thus the Jericho dates have given an entirely new significance to the whole place.

In the previous chapter, attention has been drawn to the probability that Moses was the favorite of Hatshepsut. Here, then was his patroness, restoring and beautifying a temple devoted to the worship of Moses' race, in that very country to which in later years he led the Israelites. The conclusions to be drawn from these "coincidences" are, of course, speculative, but verily they rest on a much healthier basis than the "assured results" of the past generation of higher critics! They are:

- (a) That Moses himself, when a young man, was well acquainted with this temple of Semitic worship in Sinai.
- (b) That he used such Semitic ritual in a purified and monotheistic form for the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

Again, Bible students will recollect how the ten plagues of Egypt followed Moses' request to Pharaoh: "Let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice unto the Lord our God" (Ex. 5:3). Sir Flinders Petrie is of

the opinion that "the three days' journey into the wilderness" was the phrase used in Egypt for going down to Sinai. At a later stage in the sacred narrative (Ex. 8: 25-27) we read:

"And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. And Moses said, It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? We will go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice. . . ."

Other allusions to "the abomination of the Egyptians" cause us to infer that the reference here is to the sacrifice of sheep. Anyhow, the passage brings out the difference between Egyptian and Israelite sacrifices.

Was Moses' pretext for taking the Israelites out of Egypt that they might sacrifice at Serabit?

As already pointed out, the evidence that the Temple of Serabit supplies of the common use of alphabetical writing among Semites at the very time of Moses, is also evidence, that the great leader and lawgiver of the Israelites, had means at his disposal for committing his legislation in writing to posterity, as well as the contemporary history of his race.

The inscriptions, written in an alphabetical language, found at Ras Shamra, use only cuneiform,

or straight wedge-shaped characters. At Serabit some of the characters are curved, and they more nearly resemble Egyptian hieroglyphics on the one hand, and the later Phœnician and Hebrew scripts on the other. The Phœnician has been provisionally dated at 1350 B. C., while these Serabit signs, according to the discoveries referred to above, are much earlier. If the miners were Midianites, Moses probably learned them very thoroughly during his long sojourn in that country.

It has been contended that the intermittent working of the Sinai mines made it unlikely that Moses ever led the Israelites into this region. But the evidence that the miners were Semites places a different aspect upon this conjecture. Were the mines in Sinai being worked when the Pharaohs were spending all their time and energies in conquering Palestine and Syria? Did this take place while the Israelites were in the wilderness? But in any event, the presence of Semitic miners in Sinai, was an additional guarantee for the safety of the Israelites; and that the Egyptian army would not pursue them into that inhospitable region.

A potsherd found at Beth Shemesh in Palestine by Dr. Grant has writing upon it which resembles the Sinai alphabet. Dr. Albright, from the circumstances attending its discovery, is satisfied that it must date from not later than the fourteenth century B. C. This would date it to the time of Joshua's conquest of the country.

The manifestations from the Unseen which accompanied the journeys of the Israelites—such as the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night; or the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai—are phenomena which modern writers associate with volcanic action. There is really no necessity to identify them with natural phenomena as is commonly known and recognized to-day; although even if this is done, it does not remove them from the direct action of the Deity, working through the instrumentality with which we are familiar.

But the author would identify these manifestations with phenomena as yet but imperfectly recognized, which on a far, far smaller scale are beginning to be studied at the present time. Here at that supreme moment in the history of the religion of the Israelites, there was outpoured on these people terrific evidences of the reality of that God, in whom, as St. Paul told the Athenians, we live and move, and have our being.

### XIII

#### THE EVIDENCE FROM RAS SHAMRA

**T**HIS chapter will contain a fuller account of the important Ras Shamra inscriptions, references to which are scattered all through this volume.

In May, 1929, two French archæologists, MM. Schaeffer and Chenet, in digging among the ruins of Ras Shamra in North Syria, opposite the Island of Cyprus, came across some clay tablets inscribed with a new kind of cuneiform writing. These aroused such interest that in 1930-1932 the French authorities invited these two excavators to make more extensive excavations. With a greatly augmented band of native workers, some most interesting discoveries were made among the royal tombs of the place, in the form of quantities of pottery, decorated vases, perfume bottles, carved ivory vases, toilet outfits, weapons of bronze, brooches and necklaces of gold and silver, stone altars, etc., etc. In due course the site of the city's temple was excavated; it contained a large rectangular courtyard, and a stone platform, upon which the images of gods and goddesses once stood. Remains of these were found among the ruins. Near

a broad staircase, pieces of a large sphinx of green stone came to light; and on its breast an inscription in Egyptian hieroglyphics to indicate that it was a gift from the Pharaoh Amenemhat III (Petrie's date B. C. 2432). The association of this Pharaoh with the Temple of Serabit in Sinai, to which reference has been made in the previous chapter, also indicates that whatever his origin, he had very friendly relations with the Semites whether of Phoenicia or of Sinai.

There was also found among these ruins a portrait of a wife of another Pharaoh, about the same period, so also was a statue of a Hittite deity. In the neighborhood of the spot where the mysterious alphabetical cuneiform tablets had been previously found, the workers ultimately came upon the contents of the temple library. The ruins of the building associated with these finds had been a school or college for scribes. Clay tablets were there whose surfaces had obviously been used for writing exercises. Similar discoveries have been made in Babylonia; they testify to the widespread use of the art of writing in these remote ages. Others of the tablets were dictionaries or works of reference. There was also a register of ships which used the seaport. Its position opposite Cyprus, and on the mainland of northern Syria, made Ras Shamra a cosmopolitan spot, a meeting place of many nations. An examination of all the tablets found, revealed the fact that eight languages were



spoken in the city, or at any rate inscribed upon its tablets, and that the pupils at the college were taught these scripts. The languages were:

- (a) The archaic Hebrew written in the cuneiform alphabetical script which forms the subject of our references.
- (b) The Babylonian language in the conventional cuneiform script such as was used in the Tel el Amarna letters.
- (c) The Sumerian language, which was older than the Babylonian.
- (d) and (e) two unknown languages.
- (f) The Egyptian and its hieroglyphics.
- (g) The Hittite, whose scripts are now being deciphered.
- (h) Another unknown language which appears to hail from Cyprus and Crete.

These tablets indicate that some fifty gods, and half as many goddesses, were particularly associated with Ras Shamra. We are reminded of the bitter taunt made by Jeremiah, the prophet, many centuries later, to the Jews: "According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah!" Such is the background presented by the alphabetical cuneiform inscriptions in archaic Hebrew found at Ras Shamra. The tablets inscribed in the other seven languages only concern us in the matter of date. Mr. Theodore Gaster of London recently visited Paris to study these archaic Hebrew inscriptions which are now lodged in the Louvre Museum; and the author is indebted to him for a portion of

the following information. The methods employed for the decipherment of these tablets have been already described. A considerable number have not been published and their full significance cannot yet be understood or appreciated. The tablets are provisionally dated between B. C. 1400–1350; that is to say, they are thought to have been written at the same time as the Tel el Amarna tablets, and during Joshua's conquest of Canaan. The ancient name for Ras Shamra seems to have been Ugarit, a seaport which figures in various Egyptian texts, particularly in the time of Rameses II (1295–1229). It should here be remarked, that as the Egyptian series of tablets found with these records, are said to date from this latter period, it seems possible that those we are discussing also belong to this time. There is, for example, an account of a conflict between one Keret king of Zidon, and the tribes of Asher, and Zebulun, allied with Edomites. This so accords with Joshua's invasion, that it seems difficult to believe it refers to anything else. For example, the Bible tells us (Gen. 49: 13) in the blessing pronounced by Jacob upon his twelve sons that "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven (or beach) of the sea . . . and his border shall be upon Sidon." This Sidon appears to be identical with Zidon. Later, in the division of the country, Zebulun is associated with the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19: 27). The reference to the latter tribe in its proper place in Palestine in the Egyptian

records of Seti I (B. C. 1310), led to all sorts of mistakes, because authorities had mistaken the date of the Exodus and placed it a century after this date. It would be unfortunate if commentators should be tied up in another chain of errors, because this tablet has been dated too early. Here is the association on the tablet, of Zebulun, (whose border was to be to Zidon), with Asher, and with Edom, the latter being the district from which Joshua and the Israelites came; and lastly, the tablet records these people as being under the protection of their god Terach, the moon-god, from which deity the father of Abraham took his name.

If the tablet was written between B. C. 1400-1350, it would seem to be dealing with current events; if, on the other hand, it belongs to say B. C. 1200, then two centuries may have elapsed. To discover a purely mythical Zebulun, and a purely mythical Asher, of a much earlier date, creates complications; unless one assumes that the author was inventing myths to satisfy, possibly to satirize, recent events.

Some of the contents of these tablets consist of ceremonial rituals or liturgies, which, in their phrasing, remind us of the Bible. But besides that, they mention the following sacrifices, familiar to readers of the Old Testament. Here the technical terms in the archaic Hebrew are identical with similar technical terms in the original Hebrew of the Bible:

- (1) THE TRESPASS OFFERING—to which there are allusions in Leviticus 5: 15, Leviticus 7: 1, 2, 5 and 37, Leviticus 14: 12, 13, Numbers 6: 12, Numbers 18: 19, Ezekiel 40: 39, etc.
- (2) THE PEACE OFFERING. See Leviticus 22: 21, Numbers 6: 17, Numbers 15: 8, Deuteronomy 27: 7.
- (3) THE TRIBUTE OFFERING—to which there are allusions in Exodus 28: 38, Leviticus 23: 38 (Revised Version "gifts"), Deuteronomy 16:17, Ezekiel 20: 26, 31.
- (4) THE WAVE OFFERING. See Exodus 29: 24, 26, Leviticus 7: 30, Leviticus 8: 27, Leviticus 9: 21, etc., Numbers 6: 20, Numbers 8: 15, etc.
- (5) FIRSTFRUITS. See Exodus 23: 19, Exodus 34: 26, Leviticus 2: 12, Numbers 18: 12, Deuteronomy 26: 2, 10, Ezekiel 20: 40.
- (6) BREAD OF THE GODS. See Leviticus 21: 6, 8, 17, Malachi 1: 7.
- (7) BURNT OFFERING. See Leviticus 4: 12.
- (8) WHOLE BURNT OFFERING. See Leviticus 6: 15, Deuteronomy 13: 17, Deuteronomy 33: 10.
- (9) OFFERING FOR "EXPIATION OF THE SOUL." Compare the phrasing of Leviticus 4: 2.
- (10) NEW MOON OFFERING. See Numbers 28: 11.

The Divine Names "El" and "Elohim" also appear often on these tablets; they are the words that occur thousands of times in the original Hebrew version of the Bible, and are translated

"God" in our English versions. The very first sentence in the Bible is literally—"In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth."

The name "Yah" familiar to us as Jehovah, also occurs in the following passage on one of the tablets:

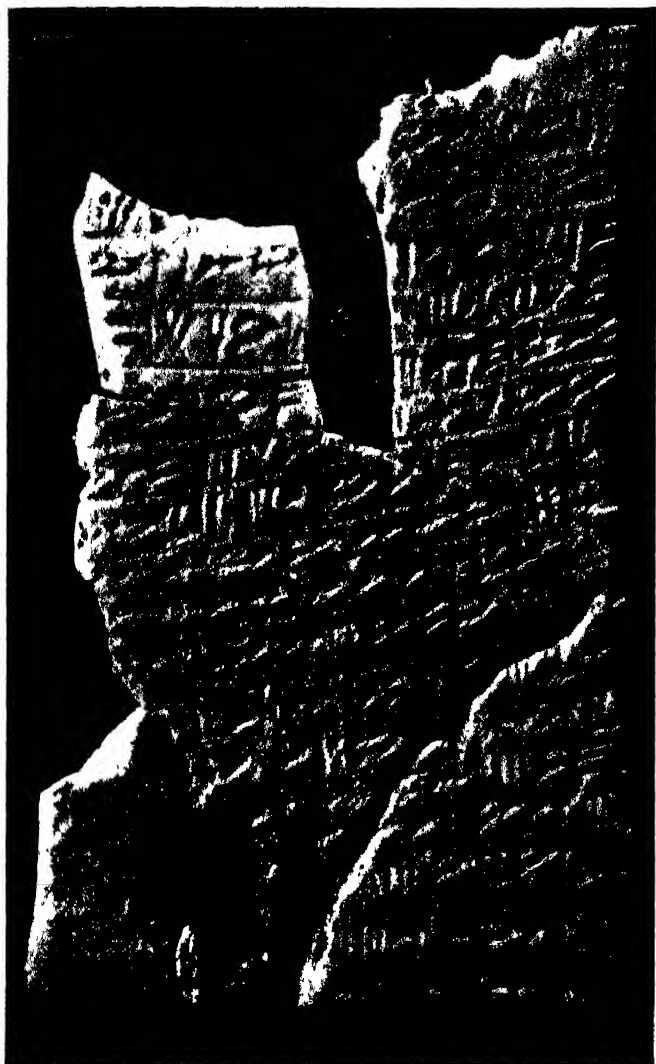
"THE NAME OF MY SON IS YAH-ELAT" . . .

The portion of the tablet, on which further words of this sentence were written, has been broken away; so Elat may begin another sentence and not link up with Yah; or on the other hand it may actually be Yah-Elim, in other words Jehovah-Elohim.

There is also a ceremony of boiling a kid in its mother's milk. It was intended as a milk charm; but it is expressly forbidden the Israelites. See Exodus 23: 19 or Deuteronomy 14: 21.

Again there is a ritual text for offerings on the housetops to the sun, moon, and stars. The prohibition of this practice in Deuteronomy 4: 19 does not mention the housetops, since the Israelites were then dwelling in tents, but the custom is denounced later by the prophets Jeremiah and Zephaniah.

Here then are tablets written in archaic Hebrew, said to be contemporary with the time of Joshua, which contain the Divine Names, and the mention of sacrifices instituted by Moses. But the matter does not end there. References also occur to the



ONE OF THE RAS SHAMRA TABLETS

The writing is in alphabetical cuneiform, the language in archaic Hebrew. (*By courtesy of Syria.*)



tabernacle and its furnishings which Moses provided for the Israelites in the wilderness. The tablets refer to:

- (a) THE COURTYARD OF THE TENT, which accords with the Court of the Tabernacle. See Exodus 27: 9, Exodus 35: 17, Exodus 38: 9, etc.
- (b) THE HOLY PLACE OF THE HOLY PLACES, which compares with the "Holy of Holies" (Ex. 26: 33, 34, etc.).
- (c) THE TABLE OF GOLD IN THE SANCTUARY, which compares with the table overlain with gold (Ex. 25: 24, Lev. 24: 6).
- (d) GUESTS OF THE GODS. In the tablets the sacred enclosure was regarded as "sanctuary." The expression "Guest" is the same as used in the Bible for "stranger within the gates" (Ex. 20: 10, Deut. 5: 14).
- (e) THE PRIEST in the Ras Shamra ritual is called "Kohen," the name for the priests of the Israelites. The same word is used of Melchizedek, king of Salem, "priest of El Elyon" (Gen. 14: 18); and of Jethro, priest of Midian (Ex. 2: 16).
- (f) ARK OF THE COVENANT. There is an allusion in the Ras Shamra tablets to a sacred object called "Ed," round which the women worshippers danced. This may be a reference to the ark of the Covenant since the word for "Covenant" is "Eduth."
- (g) CERTAIN OFFERINGS ON THE HEARTH OR ASHPIT which compares with Leviticus 4: 12.
- (h) THE SACRED NUMBER SEVEN is familiar to



us in connection with "the seventh day" (Ex. 20: 8), or with "the year of release" (Deut. 15: 1). It occurs frequently in the Ras Shamra tablets, where there are festivals of seven days duration, seven years reign of the king, seven years influence of departed spirits, etc.

- (e) THE DEAD ARE KNOWN AS "REPHAIM," a word translated both as "giants," and "dead" in the Bible. Reference to the latter usage will be found in Job 26: 5 or Psalm 88: 10.
- (j) LEVIATHAN. A Ras Shamra tablet says: "Didst thou not smite Leviathan, the swift serpent, even the crooked serpent? Didst thou not break in pieces his seven heads?" The resemblance of this passage to Isaiah 27: 1 is exact; and an echo of it will be found in Psalm 74: 14. There seem also to be allusions in Revelation 12: 3.

As if this was not enough to relate these rituals and their accessories with those of the Israelites under the leadership of Moses, some of these inscriptions refer to mystic rites in the wilderness of Kadesh, a place where the Israelites sojourned during their wanderings (Num. 20). Sahar and Salem were simultaneously born there, children of Terach the moon-god. Another tablet seems to put matters rather differently and to refer to the birth of the seventh of the great gods—Shalem Shakhar. Either way there appears to be a reference to a deity who gave his name to Jeru-

salem. Associated with this deity are the words "He shall upbuild Ashdod." Ashdod was near Askelon, in the south of Palestine on the Mediterranean. It is known to-day as Esdud. Once, it was one of the five great Philistine cities, but the reference here is apparently to an earlier time. The distinguished French writer—M. Dussaud—has connected the references on the tablets with a trade route from the north end of the Gulf of Akaba on the Red Sea, through Kadesh to Ashdod—in other words a route from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean.

Who were the people that wrote these tablets, and that used these sacrifices and ceremonies? On the tablets they represent themselves to be Arabs who had come from the Arabah, the district in the extreme south of Palestine around the Dead Sea which is called "the Sea of the Arabah" in Joshua 3: 16. The following passage (2 Chron 26: 6, 7) has been quoted as throwing light on this connection:

"He [King Uzziah] went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities in the country of Ashdod, and among the Philistines. And God helped him against the Philistines, *and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-Baal, and the Meunim.*"

Uzziah was king of Judah in the days of Isaiah, a good many centuries after the dates assigned to these tablets. But the association between Ashdod and the Arabians is interesting, even though it occurs so very long after the mythological events connected with Shalem-Shasar. According to the tablet someone had destroyed Ashdod; and Shalem-Shasar was to rebuild it—are we after all reading tablets that were written after the Philistines had arrived on the coastlands of Palestine about B. C. 1200?

There is an ancient tradition which represents the Phœnicians as being descended from sojourners round the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, who fled to the Syrian coast in consequence of the cataclysm that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

That seems to fit these Arabs from the Arabah. But Ras Shamra was such a polyglot place, that there may be confusion in anything so definite. Again, have we to do here with Midianites? Those people among whom Moses lived for forty years, and to whom considerable reference has been made in a previous chapter?

In the present state of knowledge about the Ras Shamra inscriptions there is a considerable element of speculation.

From the information at our disposal, it would seem that the authors of these pagan ritual, ceremonial, and other tablets, have appropriated quite a good deal of the ritual and sacrifices instituted

by Moses; and copied as well still earlier rituals such as used by Abraham, by Melchizedek, king of Salem, and probably also by Jethro, the priest of Midian.

The earliest date assigned to these tablets is from forty to eighty years after the promulgation of the Law on Mount Sinai. They may prove to be two hundred years after. What happened to Moses and to the Israelites in the wilderness must have become known to those associated with his religion and race elsewhere. The account of these tremendous manifestations in Sinai must have spread abroad, and communications from Sinai to Midian, would be passed on in time to Ras Shamra by Midianite merchantmen, pursuing their trade-route in various directions.

These "Arabs," at this important seaport of Ras Shamra, would hear about the phenomena associated with Moses, and eager to reproduce his rituals and ceremonies. With fifty-five gods, and twenty-five goddesses of their own, and eight different languages, this ancient college of writing that MM. Schaeffer and Chenet unearthed, seems to have been nothing more nor less than a theological seminary.

If, on the other hand, the tablets were written in the days of Rameses II (1295-1229), the ritual and sacrifices recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, had been used in the neighboring country of Palestine for a hundred

years or more; and would have been quite familiar to Semites in Syria.

The assumption has been made that the ritual ceremonials, and sacrifices, inscribed on these tablets, embody primitive rituals of a far earlier date. To some extent that is true, but in our present state of knowledge it would be another of those great blunders, which have so disfigured Bible criticism, to overestimate it.

As however will be more clearly brought out in the next chapter, the Bible itself supplies evidence of the earlier Semitic ritual in existence long before Moses. And what applies to ritual, archæology has proved, applies also to the laws instituted by Moses. Thus the code of Hammurabi, promulgated in the days of Abraham, bears resemblances to the Mosaic code of laws. Hammurabi's code of laws, engraved upon a diorite stele eight feet high, was discovered some thirty years ago at Susa, whither the Elamites had carried it for plunder.

The further excavations made by Dr. Schaeffer during the year 1933 have brought to light two splendid gold vases which are dated between 1400-1200 B. C., and which are engraved with mythological and animal characters. He has also definitely identified the city with the ancient seaport of Ugarit. More tablets have been found. One of them deals with the diseases of horses. One remedy prescribed, is a poultice made from figs called

“debelet.” It is suggested that this is the remedy prescribed by the prophet Isaiah for King Hezekiah in the following passage: “And Isaiah said, Take a cake of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he [Hezekiah] recovered” (2 Kings 20: 7). A section has now been dug into the Ras Shamra mound from the top to virgin soil. This enabled a study to be made of the different strata, representing the ruins of different cities superimposed one above the other. The upper levels belong to the period of Egypt’s eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties (1573 to 1200 B. C.), the next belong to the time of the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, and the lower to the twelfth dynasty of Egypt (2584–2371 B. C. [Petrie]).

Such is the kind of evidence which is now being found in Syria, and there is doubtless more of a similar character buried somewhere beneath the soil of the Holy Land.

## XIV

### EVIDENCES OF RELIGION BEFORE MOSES

**I**T has already been suggested that the Bible makes much contact with a region which has been far less explored than Palestine—let us call it the land of the Unseen. The radio is beginning to make us familiar with its reality; at any rate to make us understand that what is invisible to our eyes, has nevertheless both potentialities and possibilities.

But mankind has always been in contact with the Unseen through some of his senses. The unsound materialistic teaching of the past generation obscured this great fact of existence. Too much emphasis was placed on what was dubbed "Reason," and too little on Intuition. Yet Feelings and Emotions always play a greater part in our lives than we care to recognize. One who has been engaged in industry and commerce from his youth up, has noticed the conspicuous part that sentiment plays in business, despite all assertions to the contrary.

Associated with the emotions, are the senses of Beauty, in Nature as well as in Art. Such senses connect us with Poetry, Literature, Music, Paint-

ing, Sculpture, Drama, etc. Some people lack one or more of these senses, even as there are those who are color blind.

Writing of color will remind us that colors come from the light; and that what to us represent colors, are merely mediums which select and reflect the colored rays from the light prism. It is significant to find, that nearly all the great masters of the Arts have claimed that they were more in the nature of mediums for the transmission of something that reached them from the Unseen, rather than the actual originators of their work. To put this idea into radio language—the great poets, writers, musicians, painters, sculptors, actors, etc., appear to have inside them receiving stations, that can tune in to various types of vibrations which we will call “Celestial Ray” wave lengths. These communications the artist in turn transmits to his fellow creatures, and to posterity. Even so do Nature’s flowers each reflect its own particular colors from the light. Here again, let us pause to observe that just as there are those who are color blind, so there are also those who have no sense of poetry; or no sense of music; and so on.

Now besides receptivity to these art vibrations, if they may be so called, there exists receptivity to other types of communications. The author is, of course, aware that those who have had no experience, nor taken the trouble to study such mat-



ters, represent these other types as all fraudulent. So would our grandparents have dubbed the electrical results which we obtain to-day from the radio. But these other types have been well attested, both in history, and in present day experiences. They consist of words from the Unseen, visions from the Unseen, writing received other than through one's ordinary intelligence, and the gift of foretelling events. Associated with receptivity to this class of phenomena, as it is also with the art senses, are the religious senses, which are widespread, at any rate, in the young. What we call Conscience, plays a leading part in such religious manifestations, as well as Faith, Hope, Love, Joy and Peace, etc.—Gifts which religious people rightly associate with the Holy Spirit.

But here let us notice that contact with the Unseen, *does not always imply contact with Truth.*

Take for example, the dramatic passage in the Bible (1 Kings 22: 15–22) where King Ahab asks Micaiah—"Shall we go up to Ramoth-gilead to battle?" The prophet prefaces his reply with the words: "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on the right hand and on the left . . . and there came forth a spirit and . . . said . . . I will go forth and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his [Ahab's] prophets."

When we reach the culmination of the ages foreshadowed in the Book of Revelation, we read

(Chap. 12: 7): "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon warred, and his angels." Many other passages might be quoted to indicate that the Unseen includes Evil, as well as Good.

Another point it is desired to emphasize is, that all religions seem to involve contact with the Unseen. Many people are under the impression that there is nothing behind all the ceremonies and superstitions of other religions. That is incorrect. There is contact made with all sections of the Unseen, from the highest to the lowest. This constitutes the danger of what is to-day known as Spiritualism. In reading the life of Mahomet, written by men who have no knowledge of Spiritualism, it is quite obvious that Mahomet was what Spiritualists call a Medium; he made contact with the Unseen; and evolved from it a religion which is believed to-day by a vast portion of the human race; and which contains many good points. Another man who made contact with the Unseen in a similar way, was Balaam, who was fetched to curse the Israelites in the Wilderness, and blessed them. Yet another was David, who actually writes: "All this have I been made to understand in writing from the hand of Jehovah" (1 Chron. 28: 19, A. S. V.) In other words, David exercised a gift well known to psychical research—the gift of automatic writing.

The gift of prophecy, or of foretelling, or of

second sight, which is ignored by Bible critics, is also a well-known feature of contact with the Unseen. Instances abound throughout history—pagan as well as Christian. To-day people call such happenings “coincidences.” How many coincidences are required to lift such phenomena out of the region of chance into one more interesting? Those who smile at such things are unaware of the trend of modern science.

To return to archæology: as a result of his study of cuneiform tablets, Dr. Langdon writes (*Semitic Religions*, xviii): “In Sumerian and Semitic religions, monotheism preceded polytheism and belief in good and evil spirits.”

So in the study of religion, as presented to us in the ancient records before the time of Moses, we must expect to find a great mixture of good and evil, of rites and ceremonies going back to primeval times. Some of these had been debased and distorted and lost their original significance, through the intervention of influences from the Unseen which were not wholly good, and in some cases, were very evil. Great emphasis is laid upon this matter in the following words, recorded in Deuteronomy 18: 9–14 as having been spoken by Moses to the Israelites in the wilderness:

“When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There

shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. . . . For these nations which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners; but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do."

It is probably on account of the condemnation contained in such passages as these, that we find comparatively few references to primitive Semitic religion before the days of Moses. At the same time, there are enough references to indicate that the religion of Moses included a revival of former Semitic ritual, and ceremonies, cleansed and purified for the use of the Israelites. The most primitive religious ceremonies that we read about in the Bible are the sacrifices of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4). It would seem as though after Adam had been cast out of Paradise, some sense of propitiation was felt to be necessary. In Cain it took the form of the sacrifice of the fruit of the ground; in Abel the first of his sheep. Here then is the institution of sacrifices—of First Fruits, and of the Sin and Peace Offerings, in the most remote period of the human race. After the Flood we read (Gen. 8: 20): "And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar." It

is quite obvious therefore, that all kinds of sacrifices formed part of the primeval and primitive religion of mankind.

And before the days of Noah there are records of an intimate contact with the Unseen, not in these cases with mixed influences of Good and Evil, but with the Holiest and Highest. Thus we read (Gen. 5: 21, 23): "And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters; . . . and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." Observe that the expression "walked with God" is twice repeated, as though to emphasize a close and intimate communion with the Unseen over three hundred years. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews summarizing these happenings in thrilling strains of triumph (Chap. 11: 4, 5) says: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain . . . and he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death . . . for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well pleasing unto God."

And so the great Honor Roll of Faith ran from Abel and Enoch, through Noah and Abraham, on to Moses. Those who assume that the Hebrew religion began with Moses, overlook these Bible proofs of an earlier religion, of earlier sacred ceremonies and sacrifices, and even direct intercourse with the Divine. "Enoch walked with God!"

What possibilities of divine revelation are implied during the three hundred years in which Enoch enjoyed Divine Intimacy.

In consequence of that unfortunate theory of the evolution of religion, modern writers have failed to realize how those days before and after the Flood were not all evil days. There was a Golden Age, to which the ancient classical writers make references. Now archæological evidence of such times, from the older Egyptian monuments, is being brought to our notice. The walls of the galleries and rooms in the interior of the pyramids of Sakkara, are covered with hieroglyphic writings, which are dated back to the period 3500–2500 B. C., and perhaps earlier. These writings testify to a very high standard of religion. They display a conception of Righteousness and Justice such as we are familiar with in the Book of Deuteronomy, the Book of Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Isaiah, etc. Did Moses read these writings? It is quite probable. But Bible readers can trace them back to an earlier source. They are relics of the Golden Age; of the outpourings from the Unseen; of the days when Enoch walked with God. What evidence they give of a belief in a future life! And of the presence and intercourse with beings on a plane exalted far above that of the Egyptian fellahin.

So we need not be surprised that the Ras Shamra inscriptions contain a strange jumble of the Bible sacrifices and ceremonies, mingled with

the gross beliefs in pagan gods and goddesses. It is what a study of the Bible would lead us to expect. It confirms Dr. Langdon's conclusions about Good and Evil Spirits derived from a study of the Babylonian tablets. It confirms too the teaching of anthropology as set down in Dr. Schmidt's book, *The Origin and Growth of Religion*.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, we are reminded that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, king of Salem, (Heb. 7: 4) six centuries before Moses instituted them. Dr. Barton of Philadelphia has recently suggested that the ritual "Bread and Wine" ceremony, set down on one of the Ras Shamra tablets, may have actually been used by Melchizedek when he met Abraham.

Many years ago, H. Clay Trumbull of Philadelphia pointed out that the Passover was a most ancient rite, which can be traced back to what is still, to us, the twilight period of religion. And when we come to examine the sacred text, we see that it entitles us to presume the previous existence of some such ceremony.

The Ten Commandments themselves contain traces of the past, as indicated in Exodus 20: 3:

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

The injunction gathers much emphasis in the light cast by Ras Shamra excavations upon the surroundings of these people who spoke archaic He-

brew like the Israelites. Or, again, when we consider the evidence of idolatry, and Baal worship, among the Semitic miners, at the very time of Moses, in that same Sinai, at the Temple of Serabit. The like observation applies to the Commandment:

“Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image” (verse 4).

It was not alone the graven images of the Egyptians, but those of their own race, against which Israel was warned. The Fourth Commandment is even more impressive.

“Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy” (verse 8).

The very word “remember,” presupposes that the Sabbath Day was already in existence, as we know to have been the case in Babylonia: “In the official calendars the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth days, have special rubrics” (Langdon’s *Semitic Mythology*, p. 153). And allusion has already been made to the sacredness of the number seven at Ras Shamra.

It is evident that Moses’ great work was the revival of monotheism, and the cleansing and adoption of the ritual, the ceremonies, and the legislation of his race, to the worship and service of God Most High.

The incident of the Burning Bush described in



Exodus, assumes immense importance in the light of this conclusion. Although the name Jehovah is used for the Deity in some of the chapters of Genesis, yet we read (Ex. 6: 2, Amer. Stan. Ver.):

“And God spake unto Moses and said unto him—I am Jehovah; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty [Hebrew *El Shaddai*], but by my name Jehovah I was not known unto them.”

Long before Abraham, in the days of Enoch, the grandson of Adam, we are told (Gen. 4: 26): “Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah.” Presumably this title for the Deity fell into disuse before the Patriarchal period. Langdon in his *Semitic Mythology* (p. 43) commenting on the word “Jehovah” tells us that:

“In the sacred writings of the Jews this original name is correctly preserved in proper names as Yaw and Yah, but for some unexplained reason it was extended into a verbal form, apparently Yahweh, ‘He causes to be,’ and then pointed with the vowels of the word ‘Adonai,’ and pronounced Adōnai, whence the modern reading Jehovah.”

This remarkable conclusion of the Professor of Assyriology at Oxford, made several years ago, has just been verified by those Ras Shamra tablets to which such frequent reference is made in these pages. The Divine Name “Yah” occurs in these fourteenth-century B. C. documents. An earlier in-

stance occurs in a cuneiform letter from Taanach (celebrated in Deborah's Song for Sisera's defeat—see Judges 5: 19) of about 1500 B. C. in the proper name Ahiyami.

So the Divine Name translated Lord, or Jehovah, is, after all, "Yah," or "Jah," and we are reminded of a passage in the Psalms: "Praise him in his name Jah and rejoice before him" (Ps. 68: 4, English Prayer Book Version).

It has been suggested that in the name of Yah we have the original deity Ea, for Ea was the god of all mystic learning, and the Mummo, or creative word—Logos—referred to in the opening of John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word" (*Logos*). Thus, like the Bread of Life and Water of Life, the New Testament message is linked to the twilight "before Abraham was."

But to return to Moses—enough evidence has now been laid bare through archæology, to satisfy any open-minded person, that the only anachronism involved in the Pentateuch records is his intercourse with the Unseen. But the Unseen constantly obtrudes in the narratives in the New Testament; is there anything more remarkable in the incident of the Burning Bush than in, for example, the conversion of St. Paul (Acts 9)? Are we, therefore, to reject both New and Old Testaments in deference to a legacy of materialistic conceptions of the universe, now abandoned by science?

## XV

### THE EVIDENCE FROM TEL EL AMARNA

LET us now leave the evidence that concerns Moses and his work, and resume the consideration of further evidence concerning the doings of his successor—Joshua.

The date supplied us by the Jericho excavations throws a flood of light upon an old archæological find.

In the year 1887, a group of three hundred and twenty clay tablets, inscribed with the cuneiform writing in the Babylonian language, were unearthed at Tel el Amarna in Egypt. Of these, eighty-two are now in the British Museum—one hundred and sixty in Berlin—sixty at Gizeh Museum, and the rest in private hands.

Readers will remember that Tel el Amarna was the capital of the heretic Pharaoh, Akhenaten, the immediate successor of Amenhetep III. The tablets, when deciphered, proved to be letters from the kings and governors of Palestine and Syria to these two Pharaohs.

It has been already stated that after the death of Princess Hatshepsut, Thotmes III turned his

attention to the conquest of Palestine and Syria. Time after time he invaded these countries; time after time he defeated their inhabitants in battle and captured their walled cities. His successors, Amenhetep II (the Pharaoh of the Exodus), and Thotmes IV, to some extent followed up his conquests. Thus both Palestine and Syria had come under the dominion of Egypt, and their petty kings had become vassals of the reigning Pharaoh.

These letters found at Tel el Amarna, addressed to the Pharaoh Amenhetep III and Akhenaten, are full of appeals from these local rulers, to their suzerain in Egypt, for help against invaders. In the case of Syria the invaders appear to have been in league with the Hittites from the north. The rulers of the many Phœnician and other cities of Syria, alternately intrigued with them, and with each other, and appealed to Egypt for help. The records seem to indicate much duplicity. But of more concern to us, are those tablets which refer to the simultaneous invasion from the east of the Jordan by a people called the Habiru.

Since we know that Jericho fell about 1400 B. C., in the middle of the reign of Amenhetep III, and that Joshua's conquest of Canaan succeeding that event lasted many years, it has often been suggested of late years that the invaders must have been the Israelites. This identification is accepted by Dr. Langdon in a passage so important that for a second time it is set down in this work:

"The Hebrew deity El . . . whose name occurs quite regularly in the plural Elohim . . . is the god of the Habiru, a people who appear in various kingdoms and local city dynasties of Babylonia and Assyria from 2200 B. C. . . . I am entering on debatable ground here when I assume that the Hebrews and their god Illani (plural always written ideographically) are identical with the Habiru and their god Elohim. There seems no doubt at all that this was the case. . . . Accepting this thesis, the Hebrews had served for six centuries as mercenary soldiers and traders among the Babylonians, Assyrians, etc. . . . before they entered and occupied Canaan" (*Semitic Mythology*, p. 72).

This quotation, besides confirming what has been written about the early history of the Hebrews, is now used to support the Habiru identification with the Israelites in the time of Joshua. The latter, though not the only Hebrews, were a part of that race; not traders such as the Phœnicians, nor soldiers like the Hyksos, but devoted to more pastoral pursuits; and only now emerging from the desert, and only assuming the garb of war, for the invasion of their Promised Land. The Habiru also appear to have come from the direction of Mount Seir, the same route as that traversed by the Israelites. It is difficult, and well-nigh impossible, because the dates are so identical, to resist the conclusion that so far as Canaan is concerned, the Tel el Amarna letters contain Canaanite, Amorite and Jebusite accounts of the Israelite invasion—ver-

sions of the Bible story written by the other side.

The accounts are hard to decipher and fit together. The German scholar, J. A. Knudtson, in 1915, published the most complete translation, but these tablets need to be deciphered and rearranged in the light of the Jericho discoveries. Their turns of phrase often remind us of expressions in the Pentateuch, and they do contain some names that occur in the Book of Joshua. An article recently appeared in a well-known agnostic English Journal which said, in effect: Find the name of David or Solomon or Joshua among these contemporary inscriptions, and we will believe! Here, then, in these Tel el Amarna letters, is the name of Joshua.

It would appear that the writer of the letter is one Mut Baal, who seems to have been a chieftain of the Jordan valley. The letter was addressed to Ianhamu, an Egyptian governor of Palestine. Mut Baal had informed the Egyptian, that Aiah, the king of Pella, had fled before him. Pella was once an important stronghold on the east side of the Jordan Valley not so far below the Lake of Galilee; reference has already been made to some trial excavations there, in which the author has been interested. But to continue our story, Ianhamu doubted the correctness of the news. Mut Baal replies:

“As the king my lord liveth, as the king my lord

liveth, Aiah is not in Pella. For two months he has been in hiding. Ask then Benenima, ask then Tadia, ask then Jashuia."

Aiah is Job, Benenima is Benjamin, and Jashuia is Joshua. How to interpret the allusion is another matter. It seems to suggest that at the time, the Pharaoh's endeavors to pacify the country, made Egyptian influence friendly towards Joshua. On the other hand, Mut Baal may have intended to convey the impression that, since the Egyptian governor was not taking effective steps to combat the Israelite invasion, he was obviously in alliance with them! Certainly the glimpses one gains from these Ras Shamra tablets, of the pack of rascals that had been governing Palestine and Syria for Egypt, suggest that the ruling Pharaoh would not be sorry to see them replaced by a God-fearing people like the Israelites. This line of thought leads us to refer to the Egyptian history of the period.

The two Pharaohs to whom these letters were addressed were Amenhetep III (1413-1377 B. C.) and Amenhetep IV, better known as Akhenaten (1377-1361 B. C.). The former married a remarkable woman—Queen Tiy—and whether through her influence, or from other reasons, there seems to have been a decided tendency towards the worship of the Sun, or the Aten as it was called, in place of the numerous Egyptian pantheon, even

in the reign of Amenhetep III. This was a form of monotheism, which progressed so rapidly that, when Amenhetep IV came to the throne, it caused him to change his name to Akhenaten; and to change his capital city as well, to an altogether new site at Tel el Amarna. These Pharaohs cannot have been altogether ignorant of the strictly monotheistic religion that Moses had by Divine direction instituted, first in Sinai, and later at the northern end of the Gulf of Akaba, and on to the eastern side of the Dead Sea to Shittim. The first thirteen years of Amenhetep III's reign was contemporary with Moses.

It seems even possible that Queen Tiy belonged to the Semitic race. The Queen of his son Akhenaten was named Nofretete; she too may have been of Semitic descent. Anyhow there is one link between Akhenaten and the Israelites. The 104th Psalm is clearly based upon an Egyptian poem known as Akhenaten's Hymn, or of course, vice versa. This religious development in Egypt, opens up hitherto unsuspected relations with a people whose religious beliefs were far more in harmony with those of the reigning Pharaoh, than were those of the grossly polytheistic Canaanite and Amorite kings and chieftains, clamoring to the Pharaoh to come and help them. There may very well therefore have been a restraining influence behind the scenes with both Amenhetep III and his son. This enigma of Egyptian relationship with the Israelites,



forty years after the Exodus, when the memory of that bitter reverse had been softened, so far as Egypt was concerned, by subsequent triumphs in other directions, will be discussed further in the next chapter. Reasons will be suggested for the conspicuous silence of the Sacred Narrative in regard to Egyptian influence on the Israelites' fortunes in Palestine.

## XVI

### THE ENIGMA OF JUDGES

**T**HE new chronology has enabled us to connect events described in the sacred narrative, with Egyptian history before the destruction of Jericho. Let us now endeavor to ascertain whether it exhibits any connection with the Bible chronology after that event.

At first sight, our Jericho dating seems to disclose a serious discrepancy between the Book of Judges and Egyptian history. To escape needless detail, we will pass over the remaining kings of the eighteenth dynasty with the single exception of Tutonkhamen (1351-1339). It will be remembered that this Pharaoh's tomb was discovered intact some years ago by Lord Carnarvon and Mr. Howard Carter; and the marvelous ornaments and jewellery which it contained, give us some conception of the magnificence of the Egyptian court of those days. As we read the description of these splendid finds, and gaze upon their photographs, we gain some idea of the surroundings in which Moses lived a century and a half earlier. We are reminded, again, of the passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Moses when he was grown refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter . . .

esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt " (Heb. 11: 24, 26).

There were two other finds in this tomb of Tutonkhamen which deserve a passing notice. The first was the presence of writing reeds and ink palettes for the use of the deceased in the next world. The second was some small pieces of iron. It is true that Tutonkhamen reigned about fifty years after the death of Moses; but those who deny the existence of writing of this character among the Israelites of Joshua's time, and of the knowledge of iron, have to face this evidence.

We read a good deal about the Hittites in the Old Testament. In 1906 their royal library was discovered at their capital, Boghaz Keui, in Asia Minor, about one hundred and fifty miles south of the Black Sea. The tablets were written in the cuneiform script in eight different languages. Among them is one which is believed to be a letter from Tutonkhamen's widow, inviting the king of the Hittites to send one of his sons for her to marry now that her husband was dead. From Egyptian history we know that Tutonkhamen had contested the supremacy over Syria with the Hittites, who had become a very formidable rival in the north of Asia Minor. But the remainder of the eighteenth dynasty of Egypt let Palestine and Syria alone, and so did not interfere with the affairs of the Israelites.

It is when we come to the nineteenth dynasty of Egypt that our problems arise. In order to give a proper setting to the picture, the names and dates of its Pharaohs are here set down according to Sir Flinders Petrie's latest chronology:

## NINETEENTH DYNASTY

Rameses I . . .	1318-1317
Seti I . . .	1317-1295
Rameses II . . .	1295-1229
Merneptah . . .	1229-1210
Seti II . . .	1210-1205
Amenmessu . . .	1205-1204
Tausert . . .	1204-1197

The first of these Pharaohs is recorded as building a temple at Bethshean. Our Bibles tell us that: "Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean" (Judges 1: 27). But when we look for Bethshean in our maps of Palestine, we find that it was quite a long way up in the north of Palestine. How then did the Egyptians get there? We puzzle over this Egyptian intrusion into the Promised Land after the Israelites were in occupation; and matters get worse in the reign of the next king, Seti I, who made quite an expedition into Palestine, and besides occupying Bethshean, took Yenoam, and Hamath respectively, north and south of it, as well as Acre on the seacoast. We could have understood all this happening in the times of Thotmes III; but now that Israel has

entered and occupied the Promised Land it seems incredible. And not a word about it in the Book of Judges!

The record of Egyptian presence in the north of Palestine, continues and increases, during the reign of Rameses II; and farther north those who visit Syria, can still see this Pharaoh's inscription at the Dog River, a few miles above Beirut. Again, Bethshean was occupied, and re-fortified, and adorned with temples and monuments.

After Rameses II's very long reign of sixty-five years, we come to that of Merneptah, whose stele in the British Museum records that:

"The Hittite Land is at peace—plundered is the Canaan with every evil—Askelon is carried off—Gezer is seized—Yenoam is made as though non-existent—Israel is desolated, her seed is not—Kharu (south Palestine) has become a widow—all lands are united, and pacified; everyone that is turbulent is bound by king Merneptah."

If we study this record of Merneptah's expedition, with a map of Palestine before us, it seems evident that the Egyptian army followed the coast corridor route along the shore of the Mediterranean by Askelon and Gezer, and penetrated inland, before reaching Mount Carmel, to the key position of Yenoam on the Jordan, immediately below the Sea of Galilee, which his predecessor had also occupied. The juxtaposition of Israel to Yenoam on

the stele, places them in the north, near the Plain of Esdraelon, the scene of Deborah's victory, which, as will shortly be seen, probably took place soon after this event. The pacification of the south of Palestine completes the picture of Merneptah's success.

Whatever may be deduced from the silence of the Bible regarding this campaign, it is evident that it took place when Israel was already in occupation of Canaan; and its record is fatal to the claim that Merneptah was the Pharaoh of the Exodus. But if Joshua conquered Canaan nearly two centuries before this Pharaoh's campaign, how has it come about that all mention of Egypt, except in connection with the Exodus, is excluded from Joshua, Judges and the two Books of Samuel?

The omission is so conspicuous that it demands a further revision of conventional views regarding this period of Israel's history. The excavations of Jericho have familiarized us with the fact that though the city had big walls it was a little place. Canaan, the Promised Land, was also a small country, no larger than Wales, and much more rugged and mountainous. Both Joshua and Judges contain admissions, like the one already quoted regarding Bethshean, that Israel could not always drive out the existing inhabitants. The occupation by Israel was therefore not complete, except perhaps in the Hill Country and Highlands.

The recognition that the through route between

Egypt and the north passed along the seacoast, also helps us to understand the situation. Once Israel was settled they became a pastoral or agricultural people. Even fourteen centuries later the Jewish historian, Josephus, could still write of his race:

“As for ourselves, therefore, we neither inhabit a maritime country nor do we delight in merchandise, nor in such mixture with other men as arises from it: but the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains in cultivating that only” (*Against Apion*, I, 12).

Thus the main body of the Israelites held aloof from the trade routes; and we have plenty of evidence in Judges that they only fought in the last resort, and lacked weapons of war, for in Chapter 5: 8 the writer asks: “Was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?” Egypt, on the other hand, held the coastland corridor for through communications with Syria and the north; both for purposes of trade, and in order to defend itself there, against invasions similar to those of the Hyksos.

The great power of the Hittites had become an ever-threatening menace. That was why Bethshean, Yenoam, and Hamath, and Acco on the coast, were occupied by Egypt; and why it was important that Canaan, along whose shores lay the

line of communications, should be at peace and even friendly to her. The fact that it was this coast corridor which was used by the Egyptians, left the interior of Palestine intact for the Israelites.

A summary of the contents of the Book of Judges throws further light on the absence of references to Egypt. Here is a book, covering a period of nearly four centuries, composed of folklore stories all pieced together, with long intervals of rest between them.

But when all is said, the omission of Egypt from the historical narrative, is so marked that it still needs explanation.

After due weight has been given to these considerations, the ultimate key to the puzzle may be found in another direction. This is not the only example of the reticence displayed by Old Testament scribes concerning the part played by Egypt in Israel's affairs. For example, there are those mysterious allusions to the hornet, referred to in Chapter XI. The identification of this insect with the badge of the Pharaohs of Egypt, leads to the following conclusion:

Just as Egypt was not directly named as a help before the invasion, but figures *under the guise of a hornet*, so she was not mentioned as a protection after the settlement, because she was but an instrument of the Lord God; and because *all allusions to her aid would dim the glory of the Exodus*.



The Bible contains evidence that the Israelites were never tired of recalling the Exodus from Egypt, and their deliverance from the Egyptians. Year by year the celebration of the Passover reminded them of it. How could their scribes be expected to write down, that Egypt was often their protector after the occupation of their Promised Land? Or if the scribes did write it down, was it not certain that some of their successors, when they copied their writings, would omit it? Historians, who write from a patriotic standpoint, are ever prone to disregard benefits received from other nations. And this history of the Israelites was written by men imbued with an intensely patriotic religion. So the significant silence which the sacred narrative observes, regarding Egypt, in Judges and Samuel, is really evidence that the Israelites owed a good deal to that country during the period of history referred to in these books. Yet the silence has been so misunderstood that it has actually been made one of the principal reasons for saying the Exodus must have occurred after Rameses II rule in Palestine!

But though there are no direct references to Egypt, Professor Garstang has drawn attention to evidence of her presence and influence in the narrative recorded in the Book of Judges.

When the date Jericho has given us, is used as a basis for the chronology of the Book of Judges, it

is found that the periods when "the land had rest," coincide with the periods of time when Egyptian history represents the Pharaohs as exercising effective suzerainty over Palestine.

The comparative chronological tables at the end of this chapter indicate that the first three periods of rest fall exactly into periods of Egyptian history when the Pharaohs dominated Palestine. In particular attention is drawn to the eighty years' rest which coincides with the long reign of Rameses II; and to the forty years' rest which corresponds to the reigns of Rameses III, IV, V.

In his book on the subject—*Joshua, Judges*—Professor Garstang mentions two further verifications of these chronological tables. The first is a statement of Jephthah, one of the Judges, to his neighbors the Ammonites found in Judges 11: 26: "While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the side of the Arnon, three hundred years? why therefore did ye not recover them within that time? "

This presumes a period of three hundred years after the time of Joshua to Jephthah which is justified by this chronology.

The other is earlier (Chap. 5: 6), and takes us back to a celebrated Old Testament poem, the Song of Deborah—"In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travelers walked through

byways " (Amer. Stan. Ver.). The allusion seems to be to a time when lawlessness and violence had compelled the peaceful travelers to take to obscure village footpaths.

A text in an earlier chapter refers also to Shamgar the son of Anath—otherwise Shamgar Ben Anath: "And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath who smote of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad; and he also saved Israel " (Judges 3: 31, Amer. Stan. Ver.).

A reference to the chronological tables will reveal the fact that Shamgar lived in the days of Rameses II. One of this Pharaoh's sea captains was Ben Anath; he was a Syrian by birth and became the husband of one of the daughters of Rameses II. Thus he may be one and the same person with the Israelite protector—Shamgar Ben Anath. The weapon, used for slaying the Philistines, it is suggested, may possibly have been a ship named "The Ox Goad."

# COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF EARLY BIBLE HISTORY

AS ESTABLISHED BY EXCAVATIONS, AND VERIFIED BY ASTRONOMY AND HISTORY

EGYPT		OLD TESTAMENT		BABYLON
	B. C.		B. C.	
Xth Dynasty . . . . .	2812-2627			SARGON . . . . . 2751
XIth Dynasty . . . . .	2627-2584			NARAM-SIN . . . . . 2671
XIIth Dynasty . . . . .	2584-2371			SUMU-ABUM . . . . . 2169
XIIIth, XIVth and XVIIth, contemporary with Hyksos Dynasties . . . . .				
XVth Dynasty . . . . .	2371-2111	Abraham born . . . . .	. . . . . 2160	SUMULAILUM . . . . . 2155
XVIth Dynasty . . . . .	2111-1583	Abraham entered Canaan . . . . .	. . . . . 2085	ZABUM . . . . . 2119
		Destruction cities of Plain . . . . .	. . . . . 2061	APILSIN . . . . . 2105
				SINMUBALLIT . . . . . 2087
				HAMMURABI . . . . . 2067 (Amraphel)
		Isaac born . . . . .	. . . . . 2060	SAMSUILUNA . . . . . 2024
		Jacob born . . . . .	. . . . . 2000	ABESUH . . . . . 1986
		Jacob went Egypt . . . . .	. . . . . 1870	AMMIDITANA . . . . . 1958
		Israel in Egypt . . . . .	. . . . . 1870-1440	AMMIZADUGA . . . . . 1921
		Israel in Egypt . . . . .	. . . . . 1870-1440	SAMSIDITANA . . . . . 1900
		Moses born . . . . .	. . . . . 1520	
		(Period of Hatshepsut)		
		Moses fled to Midian . . . . .	. . . . . 1480	
		Exodus from Egypt . . . . .	. . . . . 1440	
		Wandering in Wilderness . . . . .	. . . . . .	
XVIIIth Dynasty				
Aohmes . . . . .	1573			
Amenhetep I . . . . .	1560			
Thotmes I . . . . .	1539			
Thotmes II . . . . .	1514			
Thotmes III . . . . .	1501			
Amenhetep II . . . . .	1447			
Thotmes IV . . . . .	1423			

# COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF EARLY BIBLE HISTORY—Continued

EGYPT		OLD TESTAMENT		BABYLON	
	B. C.		B. C.		B. C.
Amenhetep III	1413	Destruction of Jericho	1400		
Akhenaten	1377	Conquest of Canaan under Joshua to	1360		
Temenkha	1361	Israel oppressed by Hittites for eight years to	1352		
Tutankham	1351				
Ay	1339				
Setymeramen	1328	Israel at rest for 40 years until	1312		
Horemheb	1322				
XIXth Dynasty					
Rameses I	1318	Israel oppressed by Moab 18 years to	1294		
Sety I	1317				
Rameses II	1295				
Merneptah	1229	Shangar ben Anath, and 80 years' rest to	1214		
Sety II	1210				
Amenmesu	1205	(Mernepthah's raid)			
Tausert	1204				
Arisu	1197				
Sepnekht	1196	Oppression of Sisera 20 years to	1194		
Rameses III	1195				
Rameses IV	1163	Forty years' rest to	1154		
Rameses V	1157				
Rameses VI	1153	Midianite oppression 7 years to	1147		
Rameses VII	1145				
Rameses VIII	1138				
Rameses IX	1137	Gideon 40 years to	1107		
Rameses X	1137				
Rameses XI	1118				
Rameses XII	1112				

Smendes . . .	1083	Abimelech 3 years to Ammonite oppression 1 year	. . .	. . .	. . .	1104
		Jephthah 6 years to	. . .	. . .	. . .	1103
Psusenes . . .	1057	Samson, and Philistine oppression 40 years to Eli, and Philistines 20 years .	. . .	. . .	. . .	1098
		Samuel 20 years to	. . .	. . .	. . .	1058
Neferkheres . . .	1011	Saul 15 years to	. . .	. . .	. . .	1038
Amenofthis . . .	1007		. . .	. . .	. . .	1018
Osochor . . .		David 40 years to	. . .	. . .	. . .	1003
Psinaches . . .	992		. . .	. . .	. . .	963
Psousennes . . .	975	Solomon's 4th year (founding of temple)	. . .	. . .	. . .	959
Shishak . . .	940	Rehoboam . . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	923
Usarken I . . .	919	Fifth year . . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	919

The Babylonian dates on page 227 are from the Venus Tablets of Ammizaduga.

The Egyptian chronology is from Sir Flinders Petrie's "Revision of History" (*Ancient Egypt*, March, 1931). This chronology was made on a basis entirely independent of that of the Jericho dating, which Sir Flinders did not even accept. Nevertheless, these Egyptian dates fit into the Old Testament chronology based on the Jericho dating. In particular, attention is drawn to the eighty years' rest commencing in the second year of Rameses II, and to the forty years' rest commencing in the second year of Rameses III: while the fifth year of Rehoboam, when he paid tribute to Shishak (1 Kings 14:25, 26) coincides with the last year of that conqueror's reign.

Jephthah's statement that the Israelite occupation of Transjordan extended to three hundred years (Judges 11:26) furnishes a further check on the date of 1400 B. C. for the destruction of Jericho, as does, of course, the 480 years for the date of the Exodus (1 Kings 6:1) from the fourth year of King Solomon.

## XVII

### THE EVIDENCE FROM TELL DUWEIR (LACHISH)

**T**ELL DUWEIR is one of the largest ancient sites in Palestine; it is situated in the low hill country of Judah about thirty miles southwest of Jerusalem, and fifteen miles west of Hebron. From its summit one looks west right out over the Philistine Plain to the blue waters of the Mediterranean, a distance of about twenty miles.

The Tell is surrounded by rugged hilly country, and forms part of a ridge of foothills which creates a natural barrier, and separates the interior of Palestine from the coastland corridor of fairly level ground that runs from Gaza to Carmel. The excavation of this great Tell was commenced in the winter of 1932-3 by a joint British and American Expedition, and continued during the winter of 1933-4 by the Wellcome Archæological Research Expedition to the Near East, both under the leadership of Mr. J. L. Starkey. A surprising amount of progress has already been made in the excavations, taking into consideration the vast area to be examined. Some of our readers may be

puzzled by the association of this mound with the Biblical city of Lachish; for it will be remembered that a site named Tell el Hesi was long ago excavated for the Palestine Exploration Fund, and assumed to be Lachish. Since the War, however, there has been a consensus of opinion that Tell el Hesi marks the site of the Biblical city of Eglon, and that the great mound of Tell Duweir must be the far more important city of Lachish. The excavations up to date favor this identification.

A passing reference must now be made to Sennacherib, the great king of Assyria, who ruled 704–681 B. C. Dr. Frankfort, excavating on behalf of the Chicago Oriental Institute, has recently found remains of the canal by which this king conveyed water from the Gomel river to his city of Nineveh. The canal passed through tunnels and over aqueducts. Perhaps Hezekiah, king of Judah, had heard of it, when he cut an underground channel through Ophel, in order to bring the water of the Virgin's Fountain inside Jerusalem.

Those who have visited the British Museum may recall the magnificent stone bas-reliefs that once adorned the walls of Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh. They depict the storming of Lachish by this Assyrian king in the days of Hezekiah, king of Judah. References to the siege will be found in 2 Kings 18: 14–17, and Isaiah 36: 2. Here, it may be mentioned, a bronze crest of a helmet has been unearthed in the ruins of Tell Duweir that is like



the crests of the peculiar helmets worn by Sennacherib's spearmen on the bas-reliefs. This forms some slight evidence of identification.

In the excavation of ancient sites, remains of the last buildings, of course, come first. At Tell Duweir was found the wall of the city built by Rehoboam king of Judah (2 Chron. 11: 9), which bore evidence of having been breached by Sennacherib, 701 B. C., and later ruined by Nebuchadnezzar, 586-588 B. C. The examination of the remains of this wall brought to light some interesting evidence. The siege by the Assyrians under Sennacherib had been conducted on the lines depicted in the bas-relief, by assault and breaching. But Nebuchadnezzar and his army had used more brutal methods; they literally burnt their way through the walls where they had been repaired after Sennacherib's siege. To accomplish this, the Babylonians had cut down all the olive, fig and oak trees, that in those days covered the neighboring hills, piled them with other combustible material against the repaired breaches, and set them on fire. The intense heat thus engendered reduced the limestone to powder, destroying large sections of wall. Thus the way was made for the entrance of the Babylonian army.

Bible students will remember that Lachish was captured by Joshua after he had defeated the five kings of the Amorites, headed by Adonizedek, king of Jerusalem. Japhia, king of Lachish, is stated



THE EWER

With alphabetic script round the neck, as found in fragments in the ruins of the small temple outside the walls of Tell Duweir (Lachish)  
(1295-1262 B.C.)



to have been one of them, and the subsequent fate of the city is recorded in the following verses:

“And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it; and the Lord delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel; and he took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein ” (Joshua 10: 31-32).

Although the surface of the Tell has as yet been only partly excavated, the Expedition has carried out a great deal of exploration of its surroundings, and dug sections into its sides. A great number of rock cut tombs have also been opened in the surrounding valley, and the pottery, and other objects found inside them, have been examined.

With the aid of these it is possible to reconstruct some of the history of the place. It is surprising to be told that the greatest expansion of the city is estimated to have been about 3000-4000 B. C., or two thousand years before Abraham. Then the Tell seems to have been used as the citadel, or acropolis, of a much larger settlement, which, so far as can be judged at present, was without other defences. The next great change in the story appears at present to be marked by the characteristic Hyksos, or Shepherd King type of fortification, consisting of the sloping glacis and ditch. Cut into the glacis and then running parallel along its in-

terior, were the traces of a subterranean passage, about four feet high, the floor of which had been trodden down hard by the passing of many feet.

The sloping rampart type of fortification, unlike the upright wall, afforded no sort of shelter for its assailants. All the way up the slope the attack was exposed to the arrows and missiles of the defenders. This obstacle was overcome by undermining. Once a passage inside, and parallel with the rampart, had been made, at a given signal it would have been easy to break through the interior side of the defences at many points, and to make a concerted entry into the city. Illustration of this form of attacking a besieged city by sapping has been found on Egyptian monuments. The Tell Duweir passage was, therefore, probably cut by Thotmes III in one of his great invasions of Palestine and Syria, or by an immediate predecessor.

After the city had thus come under Egyptian control in the days of the early half of the eighteenth dynasty (1573-1473 B. C.) its prosperity revived. Houses were built again on the lower slopes of the Tell, and in the surrounding valleys, and here the account of these excavations grows in interest.

People sometimes assume that excavation of the remains of an ancient civilization is a task in which the interest is sustained. But, like other walks in life, there is drudgery and discomfort, and even

disappointment. These are endured in the expectation of what may be found. It is this anticipation, a form of speculation, which lures one on to further labor, or to spend more money. The soil of Palestine, as compared with that of Babylonia, or Egypt, or even Syria, has held many disappointments; so when, once in a while, important buildings are found whose contents have escaped the quest of a hundred generations of pillagers, it seems almost incredible, and the fact that it is made in the Holy Land itself, enhances the discovery.

Such a piece of good fortune now fell to the lot of the Wellcome Archæological Research Expedition. It took the form of the ruins of a small temple, built right outside, and below, the walls of the city on the filling of the Hyksos fosse. The excavators, when clearing the western slopes of the mound, came upon the thick walls of a building. In the east wall were niches, one of which contained no less than thirty-five bowls stacked in position. Further excavation to the west brought to light a blue glazed vase, and a few inches below it, *face upwards*, a very large scarab on which was engraved in eight lines of hieroglyphs, the already known lion-hunt inscription of Amenhetep III, which read as follows:

“Live the Horus, the strong bull, uprising in Truth, Lord of the Double Crown, establishing

laws, making ready both plains. Horus on Nubti, great and mighty, smiting the Setiu, King of Upper and Lower Egypt RA-NEB-MAAT, son of Ra, AMEN-HETEP HEQ UAST, granted life, and the royal wife TAIY who liveth. Reckoning of lions brought by His Majesty in his shooting by himself, beginning in his first year up to the tenth year, lions terrible one hundred and two " (*Petrie Scarabs XXXI, 3*).

Here again then is a record of the Pharaoh who reigned at the time Joshua captured Jericho. And since the tenth year of his reign was B. C. 1403, it is obvious that Lachish had not then been destroyed.

In the course of the next two days, besides a large collection of objects in alabaster, faience, glass, and ivory, smashed into a thousand fragments, three more scarabs of Amenhetep III, of a smaller size, were brought to light. It now became obvious that the excavators had lighted upon a building of importance; and without stopping to record the further progress of the work, the following is a brief description of the complete find.

The building proved to be a small temple, about eighty-one feet long by forty-one feet wide. It consisted of an ante-chamber; the sanctuary itself with an altar on its south side; behind the altar a platform on which must have stood the image of the deity; and two small rooms at the back. An illustration of a reconstructional sketch of this

temple is given here. It will be seen that three steps led up to the altar on its west side, and to the platform behind it. While ranged against the three other walls, north, east, and west of this sanctuary, were nine independent benches, made of solid brick, on which presumably the offerings of the worshippers were placed. The altar itself was also a solid block of square brickwork, three feet six inches high, and its steps enabled the priest to carry out the ceremonial toilet of the image on the platform.

But the astonishing part of the whole find was the way the temple furniture had been left undisturbed. There, on the one side of the altar, sunk slightly into the floor, was a capacious round earthenware cauldron, some three feet in diameter, and rather more in depth, part full of pottery bowls, containing bones. On the other side, adjoining the steps, was a tall pottery stand and bowl for the drink offering. Alongside was an earthenware footbath for ablutions, and a decorated pottery censer for incense. The floor was strewn with quantities of pottery, and at the foot of the altar was a little curb, surrounding a small hearth, where charcoal would have been burnt for kindling purposes. The roof of the temple had been supported by oval wood pillars, their stone bases still remained, set in the plaster floor. The two rooms at the back were each about seventeen feet by thirteen. In the west one, a large collection of



faience beadwork was found, which belonged to the Tel el Amarna period of decoration, 1400-1350 B. C., and included pendants of cornflowers, of mandrake fruit, of daisies, etc., together with fragments of glass perfume vessels. On the north and east exteriors of the building were circular pits, which had been used for rubbish. They contained quantities of bones from meat offerings, and pieces of worn temple furniture and decoration.

There was a miniature face in ivory of excellent workmanship, and a beautiful outstretched ivory hand, of delicate proportions and refinement, about two-thirds life size. It would seem as though this hand had belonged to the temple image. There were also hundreds of beads and broken bowls, and forty fragments of a large ewer, which proved to be of immense importance. For round the neck of this ewer ran an inscription painted in red on a buff colored slip. This inscription is alphabetical, and its importance will be described further on. Below the writing as will be seen on reference to the illustration, one can distinguish a lion, a stag, gazelles, conventional trees, and perhaps a bird.

Among other ivory articles was a perfume flask, carved from a tusk. The flask is designed to form a lady wearing a long skirt; loop handles represent shoulders and arms; and on the slender body is a head, which served as a removable stopper. Through this ran a hole, connected with an open

hand rising above the head, which served as a spoon.

On the wall paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasty tombs in Egypt, Syrians are depicted bringing such objects as this to the Pharaoh. When account is taken of Ahab's ivory palace at Samaria (1 Kings 22: 39) some remnants of which were found by the British School of Archæology in Jerusalem in their recent excavations there; and when it is considered that the infamous Jezebel, Ahab's wife, was the daughter of a king of Sidon, it seems evident that Syria, or its coastland—Phœnicia—was the home of skilled workers in ivory. We recall too the verse in the famous forty-fifth Psalm: "Out of the ivory palaces stringed instruments have made thee glad" (v. 8), and the association of both David and Solomon with Hiram king of Tyre, and the traffic in ivory. But it is time to turn from these details, and to account for the presence of this temple outside the walls of an important Canaanite city, such as Lachish.

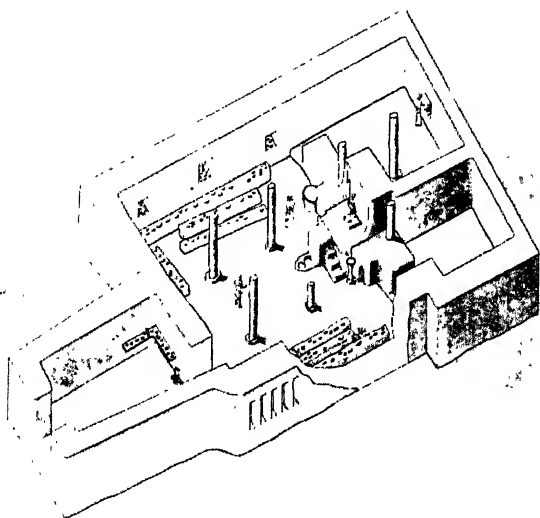
The finding of the Egyptian scarabs, and the Tel el Amarna type of ornaments, suggest that the temple had some connection with Egypt. Such a connection confirms what has already been recorded in previous chapters. Thotmes III conquered and effectively subdued Palestine, and the Tel el Amarna letters show that half a century and more later, in the days of this very Pharaoh,

Amenhetep III and his successor, there were Egyptian governors in Palestine cities. The governor of Lachish was named Zimrida. Was this the chapel where he, and those friendly to Egypt, used to worship? Though the latest pottery of the temple just described, is dated between 1295 and 1262 B. C., and though there was also found a small pendant plaque in faience bearing the faint though unmistakable cartouche of Rameses II (1295-1229 B. C.), yet beneath the remains of the present building are those of an earlier one, as yet only partially uncovered.

In putting together what we know of the period, it seems probable that the earlier temple was destroyed by the Israelites under Joshua. It was subsequently rebuilt, perhaps when Shamgar ben Anath rescued Israel from the Philistines. The probable association of that deliverer with Rameses II is referred to in the previous chapter. Egypt would however be execrated in Palestine after Merneptah's extermination of Israelites as recorded in his stele, and anything Egyptian would again have been marked for destruction. Such seems the best way to account for this temple at Tell Duweir; and anyway, it is noticeable what confirmation is given by this discovery, to conclusions reached long before it was found. To the Jericho date, for example; to the evidence from Sinai; to the evidence from Tel el Amarna; and to the previous chapter on the Book of Judges.



THE RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF TELL DUWEIR (LACHISH)



A RECONSTRUCTED PLAN OF THE TEMPLE, THE CONTENTS  
OF WHICH ARE DESCRIBED IN THE LETTERPRESS



One question remains to be answered which must have occurred to every one who has read this chapter. How is it possible that the contents of this ruin appear to have been left undisturbed since the place was burnt more than three thousand years ago? In answer to this inquiry, Mr. Starkey finds evidence that its conflagration was followed immediately by torrential rains, which caused liquid mud from the slopes to pour into the now roofless fabric, and cover up the contents. At a later date, when the city wall was rebuilt, the soil dug out for its foundations was thrown over the already buried ruin.

The alphabetical script written round the neck of the ewer found in this temple is of the utmost importance. It is stated that the date of it must be between 1295–1262 B. C. It is acknowledged by all the leading authorities to be the connecting link between the alphabetical script, found at the temple of Serabit in the Peninsula of Sinai, and the script on the tomb of the Phœnician king Ahiram.

Two other fragments of this script had been found in other places by previous explorers, but this is the most complete. It is now clear that the script was in common use in Palestine within a century of Joshua; and the interesting question arises—Was this the script in which the earlier books of the Old Testament were originally written?

The several attempts to decipher the writing are recorded on the illustration. There seems no doubt that the first word is "gift." The suggestion of Father Burrows would dedicate the gift, or offering, to Shur, Mut and Alat—three deities whose names are associated together in this same order on the Ras Shamra tablets.

It is remarkable that the Ras Shamra tablets from Phœnicia represent an attempt to reproduce the Hebrew alphabet in the cuneiform script; while this newer inscription reproduces it in the earlier Sinai script, which was afterwards adopted in Phœnicia. It would seem evident that the Ras Shamra people had heard of the alphabetical script in Sinai, and tried first to reproduce it in cuneiform. This fact suggests that these people had also heard of the Mosaic ritual, and had endeavored also to incorporate it in their pagan rites and ceremonies.

## CONCLUSION

**S**O during the past eight years, out of the dust of distant ages, all sorts of evidences have been dug up which tend to authenticate the early Bible narrative.

Our readers must have noticed the ample evidence that has been found of the use of writing, from periods so remote, that the days of Moses seem almost modern. There is the king who, on a cuneiform tablet, praises himself as one "who loved to read the writings of the age before the Flood"; and his is not an isolated reference to such writings. There is evidence of a widespread use of writing before the days of Abraham, both in Babylonia and Assyria; while the halls and galleries of the pyramids of Sakkara in Egypt had already been covered with hieroglyphic inscriptions. When we reach the days of Moses, we have arrived at a period when at least several scripts seem to have been in common use, including alphabetical writing in the very district of Sinai, into which Moses led the Israelites. As for writings in the days of Joshua, the Ras Shamra "Theological Seminary," furnishes ample evidence of what was being done in his time. This evidence for the general use of writing in the days of Moses, and of Joshua, has now become so strong, that any



oral tradition theory, of the transmission of the doings and sayings of Moses and Joshua, is no longer admissible.

Next there is the cumulative evidence from the libraries of cuneiform tablets that monotheism was the original religion. And there is the confirmation of this great fact from other sources, especially from anthropology.

Then there is the use of the Hebrew Bible's names for God in remote times, and on the Ras Shamra inscriptions. Next there is the evidence of the Flood, and of the subsequent Dispersion; of the supremacy of Shem, and the subservience of Canaan. It is true that the date of the Flood, and the extent of the Flood, is still uncertain, but there is no longer any doubt of its reality.

In these last eight years, a new type of evidence has also stepped into the witness box. Readers must have noticed how these broken bits of earthenware, testify to the general correctness of the background of the Books of Genesis and Joshua. And again, just as the geographical background of the Bible is recognized as being correct, so the potsherds have in turn established the chronological background.

And it is not merely the study of the potsherds, but the study of the movements of stars, as recorded in cuneiform writing, that testify to the correctness of the date of Abraham.

Then there is the Hyksos-Elamite culture at

Old Gaza; and the Hyksos occupation of Jericho, hard by to which city, an Elamite King, Chedor-laomer, fought a battle with his tributary subjects.

Then there is a date for the Exodus, that satisfies both Biblical and Egyptian chronology, and history.

There is also evidence for the pre-existence of ancient Semitic ritual and legislation, utilized by Moses in the compilation of the Pentateuch.

And there is further evidence to suggest that the rituals and ceremonies instituted by Moses for the Israelites in the Wilderness, about 1440 B. C., were being copied by other Hebrew-speaking people up in Syria, fifty or more years later.

Again there is corroboration for the correctness of the Book of Joshua, especially its account of the destruction of Jericho. The walls fell flat outwards just as described, and the foodstuffs had been left uneaten.

There is the further evidence of the Tel el Amarna tablets, with the mention of the Habiru or Hebrew invasion, and the actual mention of the name of Joshua.

Lastly, there is the reconciliation of the Jericho date with the history and chronology of the Book of Judges.

Readers will agree that all this new evidence creates a strong presumption for the reasonable correctness of the earlier books of the Old Testament, however that presumption may conflict with

critical conclusions. Moreover it has been pointed out how these critical conclusions rest on unsound assumptions, and are unreliable.

And it may be now further suggested, that the METHOD of the criticism applied to these sacred Books, has actually been as unsound as the assumptions.

The so-called textual criticism of the Old Testament is an endeavor to extract internal evidence from the sacred text. Such a method cannot be applied to contemporary literature. An alleged case of plagiarism of a modern book led to the Higher Criticism being brought into the Canadian Law Courts in 1931. The judge there described it as "solemn nonsense."

The case was then taken to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Ontario, and the Higher Criticism was there called by Justice Riddell "almost an insult to common sense."

Lastly the case was taken before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England—the highest legal tribunal of the British Empire,—in October, 1932. Lord Atkin, the presiding judge, described the Higher Criticism as "fantastic hypotheses."

In all Courts the case was unanimously dismissed. That is what Canadian and English judges think of Higher Criticism. But let us examine the method for ourselves.

The leading articles in *The New York Times*

are the work of various writers, but are doubtless amended by editors and sub-editors. So far as the author is aware, no textual critics ever pretend to be able to distinguish one writer from another, nor to identify the emendations of the editorial staff. If methods of textual criticism are powerless to analyze contemporary press composition, how can they correctly analyze documents composed more than two thousand years ago, and written in a dead language? Yet it is the very fact that the documents are so ancient, and the language so old, that *seems to be responsible for the superstition that the critics can do so*, and to sustain their supreme confidence.

If textual critics would try their hands on *The New York Times*, then verification, or otherwise, could immediately follow their conclusions. But the only check that can readily be applied to this Old Testament criticism, is the plain common-sense meaning of the Text, and of tradition. When these differ from the critical interpretation, they are described as "untrustworthy"; and "unreliable"; "the insertion of a later writer"; etc., slanders which could not be brought against *The Times* staff! So the process proceeds, until archaeological discoveries demonstrate some conclusion to be absurd. Then an adjustment of detail takes place, but the machinery remains the same.

Let us assume that the Pentateuch is based upon documents; and that those documents may have

been revised at various times in Jewish history. So far from that making the critics' task easier, it would seem to make it more impossible. To go behind those revisions; to break up sentences and to assign them to different unknown sources; *to date these original sources*; and then to pronounce with certainty, all manner of things directly contrary to what the text that has been so worked over tells us! Surely, this is contrary to the whole spirit of scientific inquiry as it is conducted to-day in other fields of research.

Professor Garstang has summed up the evidence supplied by the Jericho excavations in the following words:

“Set side by side with the Biblical narrative, the material evidence is seen to bear out in every essential detail the record of the capture and destruction of Jericho by the Israelites under Joshua.”

This summary of the evidence uncovered at Jericho carries far-reaching consequences.

In Chapter I, Dr. Driver's declaration on the sources and transmission of the Pentateuch has already been quoted. In his *Introduction to The Literature of the Old Testament*, the same author associates the sources of the Book of Joshua with those of the Pentateuch, and this example has been followed by later critics. Thus, side by side with Professor Garstang's conclusion, we may compare the already quoted statement:

“The two earliest narratives are undoubtedly those by J and E; these are based upon the oral traditions current in the eighth or ninth centuries” (Driver’s *Exodus*, p. xlv).

Think of it! All the “essential details” about Jericho transmitted by “oral traditions” for a period of six centuries, and even then not committed to writing! And yet the details *are correct to a remarkable degree*. Our readers may feel that in the light of Professor Garstang’s discoveries, it is more probable to presume the actual presence of J or E or some other scribe, with Joshua at the taking and destruction of Jericho.

But as the J and E of the Joshua narrative, are the same anonymous compilers of the Pentateuch, future commentators must date much of its composition back to the same period. Current critical objections to this course will probably prove to be of quite a specious character. For example the assumption that Mosaic legislation could not have been in existence till a late period of the kings of Israel and Judah, because Israel did not observe it, may be compared with an assumption that the Bible was only composed at the time of the English Reformation. There are too many evidences of the neglect of the Bible to-day, to entitle us to assume that the Pentateuch was still unwritten in David’s time.

The word “forgery” has a sinister meaning; and yet it has been a very useful word for those

whose attention is drawn to any ancient record that conflicts with their conjectures. One is reminded of the story about the schoolboy who defined a lie as "a very present help in trouble." The academic world has been far too lax in allowing ancient documents to be discredited. Thus, there is the case of Sanchuniathon's writings, alleged to have been forged by Philo of Byblos, and now verified by the Ras Shamra discoveries. There must be a number of similar records in existence, which have been set aside with equal contempt.

When we approach the study of the Old Testament, one might anticipate the critics would have employed greater care, and showed greater respect. For even if some *do* assume that Christianity does not involve the belief of a plenary inspiration of the Old Testament, yet on the other hand, the Faith does require the exercise of some sense of proportion. In His conflict with the devil in the Wilderness, the Saviour quotes thrice from the Old Testament. It is significant that all three quotations are from the Book of Deuteronomy. Now, although the commentators have dated this work as late as the sixth century B. C., the book itself purports to report the words of Moses. Whoever was the author represents Moses as saying:

"I am a hundred and twenty years old this day,"  
(Deut. 31: 2),

	Σ	+	Σ	Σ	Σ	+	+	+
<u>Gardiner</u>	M	T	N				ALLATH	LT aleph or ELAT
<u>Gaster</u>	M	T	N	3			T S D	T AN OFFERING
<u>Langdon</u>	M	T	N	3	sh			P T
<u>Stawell</u>	M	T	N	3	SG			A L T
<u>Eisler</u>	M	T	N	3	SG	L T G	L T	L T
<u>Burrows</u>	M	T	N	3	SG	W R M	T W	L T

# THE TELL DUWEIR SCRIPT AND ITS INTERPRETATIONS

The writing is painted round the neck of a ewer, mingled with conventional ornaments of a lion, a bird, giraffes and trees. It cannot be later than 1262 B.C. and is the connecting link between the Sinai and the Phœnician scripts.







and immediately afterwards his death is recorded. There follows the crossing of the Jordan and the fall of Jericho, which took place as we now know about 1400 B. C. So Moses is represented as speaking words not later than 1400 B. C., which are first committed to writing by a scribe of the sixth century. That involves an interval of more than eight hundred years. On such an assumption the Book of Deuteronomy is a pious forgery. How is it possible to believe that the Christ would choose sentences from such a work to refute the Father of Lies? In face of such a predicament it almost seems needless to recall such passages as:

“Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the Law till all things be accomplished” (Matt. 5: 18, R. V.).

“If ye believed Moses ye would believe me, *for he wrote of me*. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5: 46, 47, R. V.).

Those who in all sincerity desire independent proof of the correctness of Christ's attitude to the Old Testament, will welcome the new knowledge that archæology is giving us. And, in the language of the British Law Courts, the “solemn nonsense,” “the insult to common sense,” and the “fantastic hypotheses,” of Higher Criticism, as applied to the Bible, will be remembered with shame by future generations of scholars.

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